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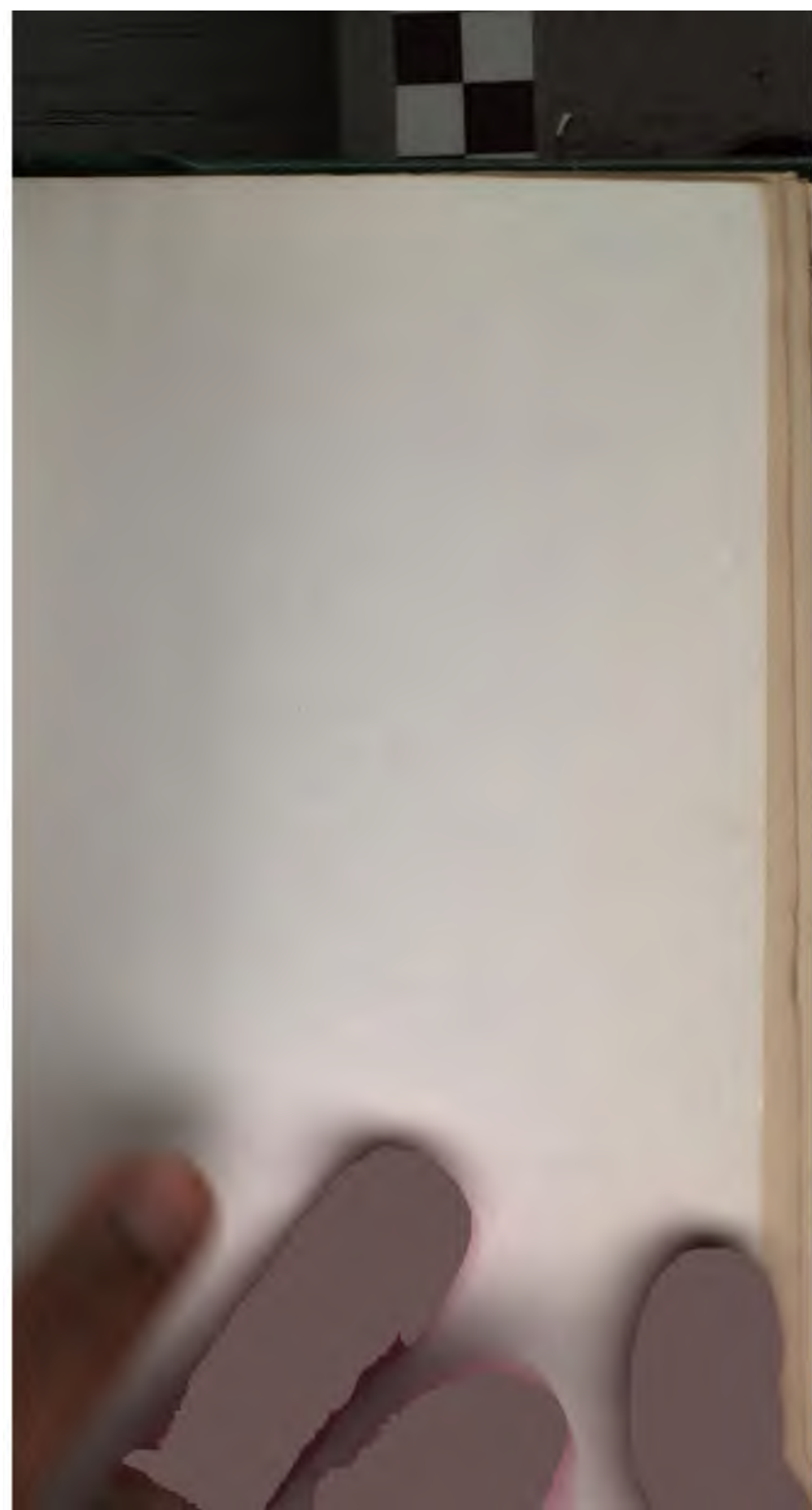
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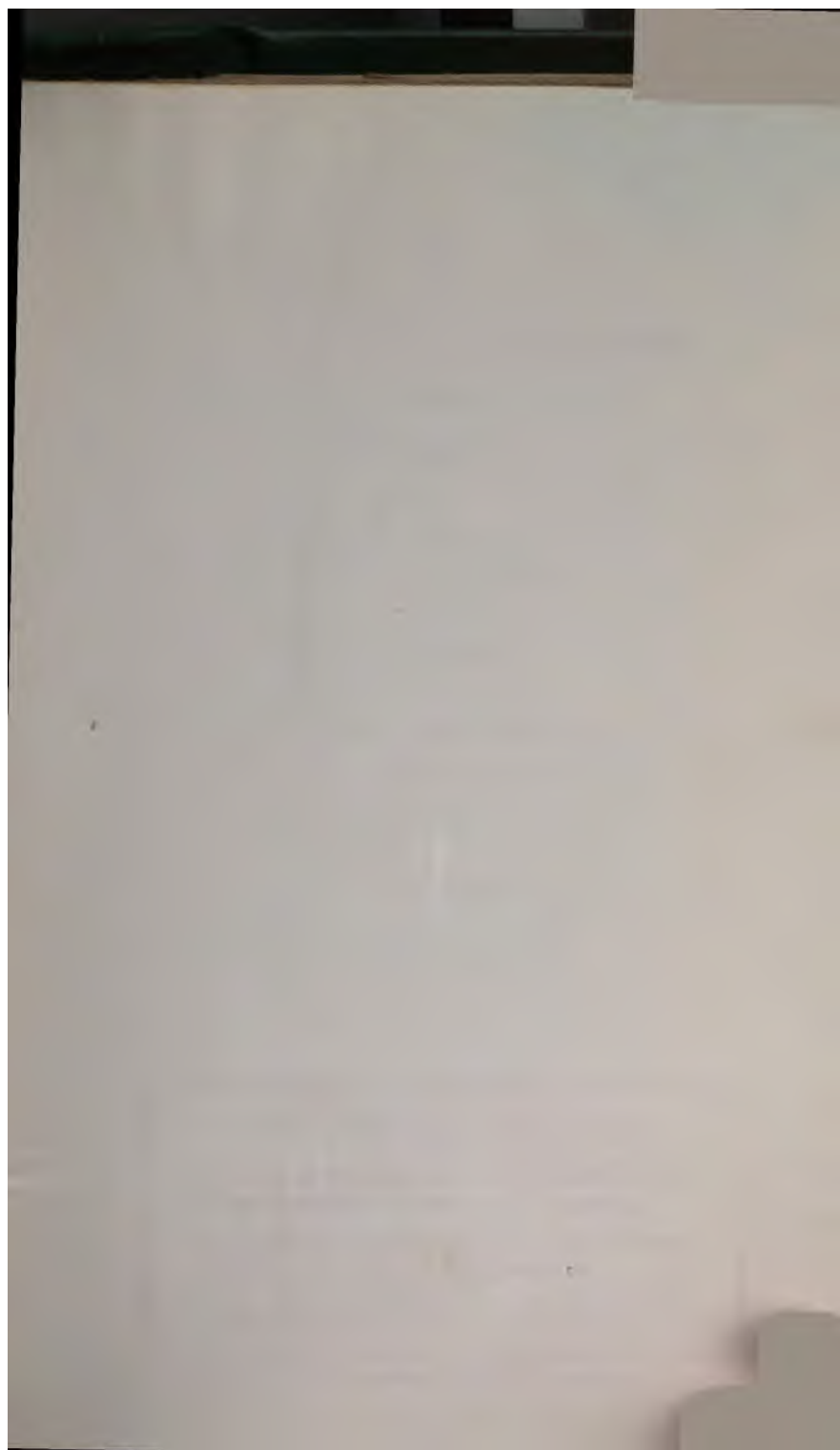














# The Home of The Eddic Poems

WITH ESPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE  
HELGI-LAYS

BY

Sophus Bugge

PROFESSOR IN THE UNIVERSITY OF CHRISTIANIA

*REVISED EDITION*

WITH A NEW INTRODUCTION CONCERNING

Old Norse Mythology

BY THE AUTHOR

TRANSLATED FROM THE NORWEGIAN BY

William Henry Schofield

INSTRUCTOR IN HARVARD UNIVERSITY

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TO THE MEMORY OF THE LATE  
PROFESSOR FRANCIS JAMES CHILD  
OF HARVARD UNIVERSITY  
WHOSE GREAT WORK 'THE ENGLISH AND  
SCOTTISH POPULAR BALLADS' SHOWS SO  
GENUINE AN APPRECIATION OF THE VALUE  
OF EARLY SCANDINAVIAN LITERATURE  
THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED  
AS A TRIBUTE OF ESTEEM AND AFFECTION  
BY THE AUTHOR AND THE  
TRANSLATOR



THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO



## TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

IT was during the winter of 1896-1897, which I had the pleasure of spending in Christiania, that Professor Bugge suggested my preparing an English edition of his *Helge-Digtene i den Ældre Edda, Deres Hjem og Forbindelser*, which had appeared but a few months before. I accepted his suggestion readily; and, Mr. Alfred Nutt having expressed his willingness to publish the book because of his personal interest in the subject, I began to work on the translation at once, that I might have the benefit of the author's counsel in matters about which I was myself uncertain, or with regard to which changes might seem advisable. Such counsel was always freely given, and the translation advanced rapidly; so that before I left for Copenhagen in the spring a first draft of the book was finished, and had been examined by the author. Since then, this draft has been carefully revised; and, while the book has been in the press, three persons have each read the proof two or three times. It is hoped, therefore, that the number of misprints which may be discovered in the text will be inconsiderable.



A word of explanation is necessary regarding the method of writing the Old Norse proper names. In many English works on Scandinavian subjects little care seems to have been taken to follow any one method consistently—Old Norse, Modern Danish, German, and English modes of spelling being strangely mixed up with one another. In this book I have used, I hope consistently, the Old Norse forms; but with the following variations: (1) In words not italicised, *ð* and *þ* are replaced by *th*, the sounds represented by this combination of letters in English being the same as those it stands for in Old Norse. (2) The ending *-r* (*-l*, *-n*) of the nominative case has been dropped, except in words ending in *-ir*, where the *-r* has been retained to avoid confusion with words ending in *-i* (like *Helgi*): thus, Gunnar, Thorstein, Egil, Høthbrodd, Fenrir. The *-r* in such a word as Baldr (gen. Baldrs) remains because it is part of the stem; compare Sigrlinn (gen. Sigrlinnar). (3) Saxo's latinised forms have usually been kept (or at least indicated), when reference is made to a personage mentioned by him; for they at once suggest the version of the story under discussion. The same is the case with the forms in Arngrim Jónsson's Latin extracts from the *Skjöldungasaga*. The quantity of long vowels has been indicated. In apparent violation of the principles above stated, a few names have been printed in the form which is definitely estab-

lished in England and America—*e.g.* Odin, Thor, Wayland.

I may add that I have employed 'Old Norse' with the meaning 'Norwegian-Icelandic.' The adjectives 'Norse' and 'Norwegian' are indifferently applied to the inhabitants of Norway in early times. 'Northern' frequently replaces 'Scandinavian.' I make no apology for using the noun 'motive' (Norwegian *motiv*, German *motif*) in the sense of 'feature, incident, episode.' This word has been used for a number of years in English works dealing with questions of literary history, and is so convenient that it may well be adopted.

I take pleasure, in conclusion, in acknowledging the kind assistance of several friends in the preparation of this book. I must thank Professor Hjalmar Falk, of the University of Christiania, and Dr. F. N. Robinson of this University, for suggestions of different kinds. I am under very great obligations to my distinguished teacher and friend, Professor George Lyman Kittredge, for whose generous aid, accorded in this case, as always, with the utmost unselfishness, I cannot express too strongly my deep feeling of gratitude. To Professor Bugge also I would thus publicly offer my hearty thanks, not only for the trouble he has willingly taken in reading both manuscript and proof, but also for his kindness in acceding to my request to prepare the very important Introduction, which appears now for the first time, a new contribution of

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distinct value to the subject of Old Norse mythology. To him is due all the honour of this work, coupled, of course, with the responsibility for the theories therein advanced. I would say, finally, that it is an especial pleasure to me to be able, thanks to the ready assent of Professor Bugge, to dedicate this volume to the memory of my revered master, the late Professor Francis James Child of this University.

WILLIAM HENRY SCHOFIELD.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY,

*February 1899.*

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## INTRODUCTION

THE Norwegian original of the present work forms the Second Series of my 'Studies on the Origin of the Scandinavian Stories of Gods and Heroes,' of which the First Series appeared at Christiania in 1881-1889.<sup>1</sup>

In the First Series I refrained from investigating the general foundation of the heathen Scandinavian religion, and made no effort to determine where Scandinavian mythological ideas, taken as a whole, had their origin, or to decide whether these ideas were known to all classes of society. My object was rather to throw light on certain of the most important of the Old Norse (Norwegian-Icelandic) myths preserved in the so-called Elder Edda, and in Snorri's Edda.

The foundations of the heathen Scandinavian religion were laid in primitive Germanic times. Near kinship between Scandinavian and other Germanic peoples reveals itself in numerous conceptions regarding the whole mythological world, and in names connected with these conceptions—*e.g.*, *Hel*, the abode of the dead, *Urðr* (A.S. *Wyrd*), who controls the fate of mortals, *álfr* (elves), *rísar* (giants), *jotnar* (giants), *dvergjar* (dwarfs), *vættir* (wights), etc., etc.

<sup>1</sup> German translation by Professor Oscar Brenner, Munich, 1889.

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Many of the gods worshipped among the Scandinavians were known and worshipped likewise among the West-Germanic peoples—particularly the chief gods, like Odin, Frigg, Thor, Týr, but still others as well. The different Germanic peoples ascribed to these several gods, to some extent, the same activity and attributes; they placed some of them in the same relations to one another, and associated not a few closely related stories with their names. But in the First Series of my Studies I have strongly emphasised the fact that we find in the two Edda-collections whole series of names of gods and giants unknown to German and English races; and that in these collections there is a very large number of stories and conceptions which cannot have arisen under primitive Germanic conditions of culture. The history of the world, for instance, is narrated in mythological language in a way entirely unknown to the early Germanic races. We cannot but marvel at the conception of life revealed in these poems, with its profound ethical seriousness, power of will, and love of battle; at the poets' description of character, playing with rough humour over the deep abyss; at the comprehensiveness of the mythological symbols; at the skill and power with which has been constructed out of varied and complex elements a grand, unified drama of the world.

In the First Series of these Studies I endeavoured to prove that many of the most important Old Norse myths are preserved in a form not older than the Viking era, and that they were shaped by Scandinavian mythological poets who associated with Christians in

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the British Isles, especially with the English and Irish. This is true, for example, of the myths of Baldr and Loki, of the ash Yggdrasil, and of *Ragnarökkr* (the end of the world). These myths in their extant form were shaped at a time when familiarity with Christian European culture, and with Jewish-Christian and classical mythological conceptions and stories current among western races (especially the English and Irish) had become widespread among Scandinavians, particularly among Norwegians and Icelanders. Such Old Norse stories of the gods are, to be sure, genuine Scandinavian mythological compositions, but they were shaped under the profound influence of foreign conceptions.

My main contention is, that at the time when the mythological Eddic stories took shape, Norwegians and Icelanders were not uninfluenced by the rest of Europe, but that they were subjected, on the contrary, to a strong and lasting influence from the Christian English and Irish. In the ninth and tenth centuries, before the German races had settled along the Baltic, it was only a very inconsiderable stream of culture that reached Norway overland by way of Denmark. Norwegians and Icelanders received at that time intellectual impulses, across the water, from western peoples who had long been cultivated and Christian. It was in this way that their chieftains and poets became familiar with the thoughts that governed men in the early Middle Ages.

The Viking period did not put an end to the myth-making activity of the Norsemen. The myth-making faculty was still alive and productive among them in



that age. It was, indeed, stimulated by their association with the Christian peoples of the West, so that in the Viking era the Scandinavian mythological conceptions became grander, broader, and deeper than those of primitive Germanic times.

Since the most important Old Norse myths are known to us in their earliest forms from the Eddic poems, the question as to the origin of these myths is most closely connected with the question *where* and *when* the Eddic poems, especially those of a mythological character, arose.

The so-called Eddic lays are preserved in Icelandic manuscripts, the oldest of which are from the thirteenth century. But these manuscripts are only copies of older codices. No one of the poems is older than the end of the ninth century. The majority of them belong to the tenth century, and some are still later. These poems were, it is true, composed by various poets, at various times, and at various places; but it is a mistake to suppose that they were never associated with one another before they were gathered into one collection in Iceland in the thirteenth century. Most of them, from their very origin, belonged to one and the same poetical and mythological tendency. Many betray such literary relations with one another that the younger presuppose the older.

Most of the Eddic poems seem to have been composed by Norsemen, or by men who traced their ancestry back to Norway, the majority coming from the western, but some also from the northern part of that country. Observe, in evidence of this, the following facts:—Hjörvarth, Helgi's father, is represented as a king of Norway. Later

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in this volume (see p. 66) I have pointed out that the author of the First Lay of Helgi Hundingsbani mentions not only the Sognefjord, but also an obscure point on the outer part of the Sognefjord; viz. *Ságunes. þolley*, another place mentioned by the same poet in the Lay of Hrímgærth, may be found in the diocese of Bergen. The poem *Hyndluljóð*, preserved in the *Flateyjarbók*, but correctly regarded as part of the Poetic Edda, deals with a family of Hørdaland in Norway. *Grímnismál* presupposes knowledge of a mythical story in the form in which that story was known in northern Norway, the old Hálogaland, and seems to show familiarity with the landscape there.<sup>1</sup> The author of *Völundarkviða*, which is probably the oldest of the heroic poems, was familiar with life in Hálogaland, where the Finns went about on snowshoes and lived by hunting. He knew that they dwelt beside inland lakes, where fir and birch grew, and where wolves and bears were plentiful; he had seen swans build their nests in summer on the shores of the solitary forest lakes.

But the Eddic poems just mentioned, and in general those Eddic lays which were the work of poets born in Norway, were not, in my opinion, composed under the influence of impressions from Norway alone. On the contrary, they were, I believe, composed after their authors had become profoundly affected by impressions, conceptions, and stories, or poems, from the British Isles; and to this influence was due, in a considerable degree, the very production of the lays themselves. It is not possible to decide in the case of each lay what

<sup>1</sup> See my Studies, First Series, pp. 422-425.

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soil the poet's foot trod when his poem took shape. Nor is that, indeed, a matter of great importance. The chief thing is to determine where the poet received the impulses that called his work into being.

We are here, moreover, concerned with a continuous literary development which we can follow through a comparatively long period of time. We may, therefore, suppose that the poems were composed, not in the widely scattered places where the several authors were born, but in some district where they associated under similar conditions of life—conditions which were essential for the production of such works, and under which the compositions of the older poets influenced those of the younger.

When this is taken into consideration, one cannot but conclude that the oldest, and, indeed, the great majority of both the mythological and heroic poems were composed by Norwegians in the British Isles, the greater number probably in northern England, but some, it may be, in Ireland, in Scotland, or in the Scottish Isles. Very few Eddic lays seem to have arisen outside of the British Isles. The late *Atlámdl*, which varies greatly from the other heroic poems on the same subject, was certainly composed in Greenland. Some of the latest poems, e.g. *Grípisspa*, may have originated in Iceland.

The old Norse poems which arose in the British Isles were carried, by way of the Scottish Isles, to Iceland,—and certainly in written form. But in Norway also, especially in the western part, several of the Eddic poems were known as early as the end of the heathen period.

There is no space here for a minute examination of all the lays with a view to seeing what light each one throws on this question, and for the present I shall only adduce a few scattered bits of evidence.

We find in most of the poems a goodly number of words which are of English origin, and cannot be shown to have been in general use in Norway or Iceland. In many cases they occur only in the Eddic lays, and must have been transferred to them from English poems. Moreover, we find in these same lays Norse poetic expressions that are reconstructions of English expressions similar in sound but etymologically different; also Latin words taken into Norse from English; and in addition certain Irish words.

The following words, selected from not a few poems, will serve as examples. *Hárbarðsljóð*, *Skírnismál*, and *Lokasenna* are closely related. In Old Norse, *gamban* occurs only in the compounds *gambanteinn*, *gambanreiði*, *gambansumbl*. The first, *gambanteinn*, which occurs in *Hárb.*, 20, and in *Skírn.*, 26, and signifies 'a twig with magic powers,' may be a reproduction of an A.S. \**gombantán*, which would signify 'a treasure-twig,' i.e. 'a twig with magic powers, by the help of which its owner could discover and obtain riches, gold and treasure,' nearly synonymous with the German *Wünschelrute*. In Anglo-Saxon, *gomban gyldan* means 'to pay tribute' (Danish 'betale skat'); and *gomban* must have meant 'treasure' (Danish 'skat') as well. In imitation of *gambanteinn* was formed *gambanreiði*, *Skírn.*, 33, referring to the wrath of the gods, which probably meant 'the anger called down upon one by striking him with a *gambanteinn*, or magic rod.' In

imitation of *gambanteinn* was formed also *gambansumbl*, Lok., 8, 'wonderful banquet,' applied to the banquet at which the gods are present. Further, the poetic word *sumbl*, 'banquet, drink,' which occurs in many poems, is of foreign origin; it goes back to A.S. *symbol*, O.S. *at sumble*, from the mediæval Latin *symbolum*, 'feast, banquet.' *Hrtmáðkr*, Skírn., 37, Lok., 53, has its model in a Latin phrase, *calix crystallinus*; *káðkr*, which occurs in several poems, comes from Latin *calix*, through A.S. *calic*. In Skírn., 29, there is mentioned as a magic sign *tjosull*, i.e. 'he who causes harm,' from A.S. *teosu*, 'harm.' In the same strophe Skírnir says to Gerth, 'I will announce to you heavy *súsbreka* and double sorrow.' *Súsbreki* arose from \**súslbreki*; the first part is A.S. *súsl*, 'torment'; the second part is O.N. *breki*, 'billow'; *sváðran súsbreka* means, then, 'the heavy billow of torments,' which shall overpower Gerth.<sup>1</sup> In Lok., 19, we read of Loki: *hann fjörg oll fla*, 'all living beings hate him'; *fjörg*, neuter, pl., is A.S. *feorg*, *feorh*, 'life, living being.' Sievers has shown that in Lok., 3, we have A.S. *oll*, 'mockery.'

In *Völundarkviða* occur many English words, as well as poetic expressions that are reconstructions of English expressions: *jarknasteinn*, from A.S. *eorcnastán*; *gim*, Vkv., 5, acc. masc., from A.S. *gim*, 'gem,' which in its turn comes from Lat. *gemma*; *ljóði*, Vkv., 10, 'prince,' formed from A.S. *líod*; *kista*, Vkv., 21, 23, borrowed by way of England from Lat. *cista*. In Vkv., 18, *frā*, i.e. *fram*, is used with the same meaning as A.S. *fram*,

<sup>1</sup> We find the same metaphor in Irish—e.g. *tuind mbroin*, 'a billow of sorrow.' The above explanation of *tjosull* and *súsbreki* was arrived at by Professor Falk and me independently.

'from,' for which the O.N. word is *frá*; in Vkv., 37, *nita* is inserted for an older *neita*, derived from A.S. *nētan*, 'to afflict'; in Vkv., 12, we should read:

*þeir er á lögðu*  
*besti þr (MS. þyr) síma.*

In *síma þr besti*, 'bond of bast,' *besti* is taken direct from an A.S. dative *bæste*, like *á stræti*, Hamth., 12, which is taken from A.S. *on stræte*, as Zimmer has pointed out. The word used in Vkv. of the maidens who come flying in swan-form, *Alvittr*, was interpreted by the Norsemen as a compound, *al-vitr*; but it is really a transformation of A.S. *ælbite*, or *elfete*, 'swans.' In Vkv., 5 and 8, we read of Wayland:

*Kom þar af veiði*  
*veðreygr skyti.*

*Veðreygr skyti* was intended by the Norse poet to mean, 'the hunter with a weather-eye,' just as the English now say: 'to keep one's weather-eye open,' 'to have a weather-eye.' But when we compare expressions in A.S. poems, like that in *Gúðlác*, 183,

*þonne hie af wādum*  
*wêrige cwōmon,*

we see that the Norse poet here imitated an A.S. poem, and, instead of the word *wêrig*, 'weary,' there used, inserted *veðreygr*, which is similar in sound but different in meaning. In Vkv., 6, *Níthuth* is called '*niara*' *dróttinn*, i.e. *Njára dróttinn*, an epithet that has hitherto been obscure. The A.S. poem which was the Norse poet's model, must have called *Níthhad* (*Níthuth*) the conqueror of *Neoðran*, i.e. 'the lower ones'

(*inferiores*). This epithet is explained by the fact that Nithhad and Weland (Wayland) here replace Minos and Daedalus, and Minos is said, by the Second Vatican Mythograph (p. 76), to have been *apud inferiores iudex*. *Njára* arose from \**Njaðra*, as O.N. *hvarir* from \**hvaðrir*. In Vkv., 28, *viðgjarnra* (MS. *viþgiarira*) is put alongside *harma*, 'sorrows.' This is probably an incorrect transference of \**inwidgyrna* (from *gyrn*, 'sorrow') in the A.S. model; cf. A.S. *inwitsorh*. Other expressions in this Norse poem which likewise find their explanation in Anglo-Saxon, might be mentioned.

In Sievers's *Beiträge* (XXII, 115-134) I have, I think, shown that *Sigurðarkviða* is an imitation of A.S. poems, and contains many English words. In other poems also, English words, or misunderstandings of English expressions, might be pointed out, as, e.g., the following from *Guðrúnarhvot*. It is there said (st. 17) that *Hogni* was cut to the heart; the word *fló* in this connection is from the A.S. dat. *flân*, from *flâ*, with the meaning of O.N. *fleinn*; *tregróf*, st. 21, 'enumeration of sorrow,' contains A.S. *râw*, or *rêw*, 'series'; *jorlum*, st. 21, means 'men,' a meaning which A.S. *eorl* may have, but not O.N. *jarl*.

Some poetic expressions in the Eddic poems are taken from extant A.S. verses. In Guthr., II, 33, Grímhild says to her daughter, 'I give thee *Vlnbjörg*, *Valbjörg*.' These places are unknown, and no one has been able to explain the names. The poet, I believe, formed them in imitation of *Widsið*, 77 f. Here *Cæsere*, the Roman Cæsar, is designated as

*se þe WİNBURGA geweald áhte,  
wiolena and wilna and WALA rices,*

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'he who had power over cities, riches, splendid possessions, and the kingdom of the Welsh.' In imitation of *wīnburg*, a poetic expression which occurs pretty often in A.S., with the meaning of 'city' in general, the Norse poet formed the place-name *Vīnbjörg*,<sup>1</sup> and then by analogy with this, he formed *Valbjörg* from *Wala rice*. In *Atlakviða*, 14, we read of Gunnar, King of the Goths, who is advancing to attack the King of the Huns, that he comes

*mēð geiri gjallanda  
at vekja gramhildi,*

'with resounding spear to awake fierce battle.' We detect more than the similarity of a poetic formula in *Widsið*, 128 :

*(hvinende fléag)  
giellende gâr on grome þéode.*

For here also we find the Goths fighting against the people of Attila. O.N. *gramhildi*, 'fierce fight for life and death,' is correctly explained by a comparison with the A.S. expression. In Akv., 18, the Huns, who take Gunnar, are wrongly called *vinir Borgunda*, 'the friends of the Burgundians.' This is probably due to a misunderstanding: in some A.S. poem, doubtless (as in *Waldere*), Gûthhere was called *wine Burgenda*, 'friend of the Burgundians,' and the Norse poet took *wine* wrongly for a plural form.

Influence from England on the Eddic poems may be

<sup>1</sup> In the same way *Hlebþjrg* in H. Hund., II, 27, is a reproduction of Danish *Laburgh*; and Norwegian *Ingibjrg* corresponds to Danish *Ingiburg*.



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detected not merely in poetic expressions, but also in poetic, saga-historical, and mythical motives, in the action of the story, and in its composition.

The Norseman who formed the mythical picture of the world-tree, the ash Yggdrasil, which the author of *Grímnismál* reproduces, imagined an eagle in the top of the tree, a squirrel running up and down its trunk, and a snake at its root. This Norseman had probably seen in the north of England monuments with sculptured ornamentation similar to those of the Bewcastle Cross in Cumberland, if, indeed, he had not seen the Bewcastle Cross itself. He had, doubtless, heard that it was the crucified Christ who was represented in such sculptures. Up the side of the cross he had seen a tree rise, in the foliage of which sat an eagle or a hawk, squirrels and dragons, and ate of the fruits of the tree. He called the squirrel by an English name, *Ratatoskr*, i.e. 'Rat-tusk,' from A.S. *ræt*, 'rat,' and *tusc*, 'tusk.'

In *Hyndluljóð*, Freyja comes at midnight with her favourite, Ottar, to the seeress Hyndla, who dwells in a cave. Freyja wishes to induce Hyndla to accompany her to Valhöll, so that Ottar may hear Hyndla enumerate the whole line of his descendants. Freyja praises Ottar; for he had raised a stone altar to her and consecrated it with the fresh blood of cattle (*nauta blóði*); he has always believed in the goddesses. Hyndla enumerates all Ottar's race for him (*allt er þat ætt þín*). This poem, which is attached to Ottar, who came from Horthaland, presupposes some familiarity with the contents of Virgil's *Æneid*. Æneas, the son and favourite of Venus, comes to *Sibylla Cumæa*, who dwells in a cave, to get her to accompany him to the abodes of the

dead, to Elysium. Æneas goes thither with the Sibyl at midnight to learn of all the race that shall descend from him. The pious Æneas shows by sacrifices his faith in many goddesses. He offers up petitions to Venus and sacrifices of cattle on altars to the goddesses of death (*pecudum sanguine*, *Æneid*, v, 736). In the abodes of the blessed, whither the Sibyl is to conduct Æneas, he shall learn of all his race (*genus omne tuum . . . disces*, *Æneid*, v, 737).

In *Rígsþula* the different ranks of society, and in particular the office of king, are referred for their origin to the god *Rígr*. We learn that the representative, or eponym, of kingship, after having proved his intellectual superiority, adopts the name of the ancestor of his race, *Rígr*. This name is, as Vigfusson observed, the Irish *rí*, oblique case *ríg*, 'king.' A Norse poet could scarcely designate the eponym of kingship by the Irish word for 'king' unless a Norse king in whose neighbourhood the poet lived, or whose subject he was, had Irish subjects as well. The theory that *Rígsþula* arose in the West is supported also by the numerous foreign words in the poem—*e.g.* *skutill*, 'a flat wooden plate' on which dishes are placed, from A.S. *scutel*, which in its turn comes from Lat. *scutella* or *scutula*; *frakka*, fem., 'a lance,' from A.S. *franca*, masc.; *kálkr*; *kanna*; *kartr*; *drekka ok dæma*, 'drink and converse,' an alteration of A.S. *drincan* and *dréman*; *Boddi*, the name of the peasant, from Irish *bodach*; *Fljóð*, one of the epithets for a woman, taken from A.S. names of women in *-fléd*.

*Völundarkviða*, as I have already hinted in what precedes, was composed with an A.S. poem on Weland

Nithhad, and Beadohild as a model. But the Norse poet represented the swan-maidens, who were introduced into the poem, as connected in race with historical kings, among others with a Frankish *Hlōðvēr*, or Ludwig, called after one of Charlemagne's successors who bore the same name.

Here I can only suggest that the saga-cycle of the *Völsungs* and *Niflungs* must have come first to the Scandinavians from the English, who in their turn learned it from the Franks. This is evident both from the subject-matter of the Scandinavian poems and from their phraseology.

The Norwegian poets who composed the majority of the Eddic lays (including the oldest pieces in the collection) were probably, as a rule, attached to the courts of Scandinavian kings who reigned, now in Northumberland, now at Dublin.

In England, epic composition probably developed earlier among the Danes than among the Norwegians. Several of the saga-historical and mythical motives and names which appear prominently in the Eddic poems seem to have been transferred from Danish poems, now lost, to the Norwegian; and this took place, at all events in part, in England. Several Norse poems included in the Eddic collection may be imitations of older Danish poems that treated the same or a closely related subject. This I have shown in the present volume to be the case with regard to the *Helgi-lays*. We may possibly draw a similar inference respecting *Grottasöngur*, if only because the chief human personage in the poem is a Danish king.

Several verses in *Atlakviða* betray A.S. influence:

for example, the phrase *geirr gjallandi*, of which mention has already been made, referring to the attack of the Goths on the Huns; *njóðrann*, 9, from A.S. *medo-ærn*. In *birnir blakkfjallir*, 11, *blakkr* has not its usual Norse meaning, but the same signification as A.S. *blæc*, 'black.' Expressions in several verses suggest Danish written forms. In Akv., 21, occurs *balldriþa*. The Norse form would be rather *ballriþa*, Lok., 37. The *d* in *balldriþa* may perhaps be explained as due either to an A.S. or to a Danish spelling. In Akv., 4, we find *serki val røþa*, i.e. *valrøða*, a Danish form of *valtrauða*. *Liðskjálfar*, Akv., 14, which alliterates with *land*, may also be Danish. In Akv., 28, it is said of Gunnar, who is being driven to the serpent-pit:

*ok meir þaðan  
mennvörð bituls  
dólgrogni dró  
til 'dauþ scokr.'*

The phrase '*dauþ scokr*,' which has never been correctly explained, should doubtless be understood as a Danish *til dǫþsc ǫkr*; *dǫþsc*=*dauðs*, the ending being written as in *Placitusdrápa*, where *borþsc*=*borðs*, *linsc*=*linnz*; *okr*, i.e. Danish *ǫkr*=Old Swedish *ǫker*, Gutnish *oykr*, O.N. *eykr*, here in the meaning of 'a span of horses,' *ǫkr* to be construed with *bituls*. *Atlakviða* seems, therefore, to be in part a reconstruction of a Danish poem, which in its turn imitated an A.S. lay on the same subject.

Several mythical words in the mythological poems in the Edda also presuppose Danish written forms. *Grímnismál*, 25, tells of the goat which stands at Valhøll and bites off '*Leraþs*' twigs. In the First

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Series of my Studies I have expressed the opinion that the foundation of the name of the heavenly tree is the Latin phrase *species lauri* in a scholium to Statius. This was translated into A.S. by \**laur-hād*, which was adopted by a Danish poet as \**Láraðr*, and this finally became in the Norse work *Læraðr*, since O.N. *lær* corresponded to Old Danish *lár*.

The first man is called, in *Völuspá*, *Ask*, the first woman, *Embla*. The man's name, 'ash,' shows that the woman's must also be that of a tree. I believe *Embla* to have arisen from a Danish *Elmbla*, formed from *aln*r, 'elm.' *Auðumbla* is likewise Danish.

The most important, from a mythological point of view, of all the Eddic poems about the gods is *Völuspá*, i.e. 'the Prophecy of the Sibyl (*völva*).' Into the mouth of a Sibyl, or prophetess, the poet has put a prediction of the fate of the whole world. She begins with the earliest eras, before heaven and earth existed, before gods and men were created, and follows the life and fate of the gods even to their destruction, and that of the world, in *ragnarök*. Nor is this all. The Sibyl sees still further into the future: she foretells the birth of a new world; she sees gods and men living in a new golden age in eternal peace and joy. Finally, she predicts that the Mighty One shall come, he who shall rule all things. She dwells longest on the beginning and end, especially the latter, and passes quickly over the life of the gods under the present order of the world.

We must infer from the manner of presentation and from the mythical personages mentioned in the poem that the author was a heathen, and belonged to a

people who worshipped the Scandinavian gods; but both in the composition as a whole, and in many single features, especially towards the conclusion, we observe the strong influence of Christian ideas.

Germanic heathendom was familiar with seeresses of supernatural powers, who were treated with respect. But the giant-fostered seeress in *Voluspá*, who turns her gaze toward the whole human race and meditates upon the fate of the world from its first beginning to its destruction and resurrection, has unquestionably Christian prototypes, and shows particular kinship with the Sibyls of the Middle Ages.

Among other Germanic peoples we have traces of poems that, like *Voluspá*, treated the creation of the world; but these poems were Christian. In a Bavarian manuscript of the early part of the ninth century, copied from an Old Saxon original, is preserved the so-called *Wessobrunner-Gebet*. This contains nine verses, forming the beginning of a poem in which the creation of the world was described in accordance with Biblical teaching. Two lines which tell of the time when 'the earth was not, nor the high heaven,' betray a similarity with lines in *Voluspá* that cannot be accidental. In *Vpá.*, 3, we read:

*jörð fannzk æva  
né upphiminn.*

In the *Wessobrunner-Gebet*:

*ero ni was  
noh ûfhimil,*

but, directly after, definite Christian ideas appear:

*dô was der eino  
almahrico cot,*

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It is evident that the author of *Beowulf* was familiar with a Christian English poem on the creation of the world. In *Béow.*, 88-98, we read that a poet (*scop*) sang to the music of the harp in the hall of the Danish king: 'He who could give an account of the creation of men from the most remote times, sang of how the Almighty created the earth, the radiant plain encircled by water, how the Glorious One established sun and moon to shine for the inhabitants of the world, and adorned the corners of the earth with branches and foliage, and likewise created life for all races, who live and move.' Here also the epithet, 'the Almighty,' points to a Christian poem.

I conjecture that the heathen Norse poet who composed *Völuspá* in the tenth century in England was familiar, when he celebrated the creation of the world, with a Christian poem on the same theme, by which he was to some extent influenced. This English epic poem, now lost, to which *Beowulf* points, also stood in historical connection with the North-German poem presupposed by the *Wessobrunner-Gebet*.

I conjecture, further, that the model of these poems, the oldest Christian Germanic poem on the creation of the world, was composed somewhat after the year 700, when English missionaries worked in North Germany.

A remarkable mythological word connects the heathen old Norse works on the fate of the world with the oldest Christian North-German work on its destruction. The beings who shall lay waste the world with fire are called, in O.N. works, 'the sons of *Múspell*.' In the Old Saxon *Heliand* (which dates from the first half of the ninth century), in a passage which attaches

itself to the words: 'So shall it be in the end of this world' (Matt. xiii. 40), we read: '*Mūdspellles* might comes over men, the end of this world' (v. 2591; *mudspellles*, Cod. Monac., *mutspellles*, Cotton.); and in another place (v. 4358): '*mūtspellli* comes as a thief in the dark night.' In a Bavarian Christian poem, written in the first half of the ninth century, the destruction of the world by fire, or the fire which shall destroy the world, is called *mūspille*.

This word was originally North-German, Old Saxon. The Old High German word is borrowed from the Old Saxon. The O.N. word is probably derived from an A.S. word, now lost, that corresponded to the Old Saxon. The word became widespread in Christian works that predicted the destruction of the world by fire. Its oldest form was probably *mūðspellli*, or *mūð-spilli*. I was the first to point out that the word had nothing to do with O.S. *spildian*, 'to harm,' but that it is derived from *spell*, 'speech, tidings, prediction, prophecy.' Dettmer has explained the first part of \**mūðspellli* as derived from *mūð*, 'mouth,' and has compared the A.S. *mūðhæl*, 'salutary words,' O.N. *munnræða*, 'speech,' etc. He regards \**mūðspellli*, which really means 'oral prediction,' as a Christian word which is a free reproduction of Latin *prophetia*. Following Vigfusson, I thought previously that in the first part of the word we had the Latin *mundus*, so that *mūðspellli* would mean 'the prediction, prophecy of the world, of *mundi consummatio*.'

In *Völuspá* the influence of Christian English works is very clear in the description of the first eras of the world. We read that the gods gave names to the



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different divisions of time. 'Then the Asir assembled on Ida-plain, they who erected high altars and temples. They built smithies and forged treasures; they made tongs and fashioned tools; they played "tables" (draughts); they lacked nothing from gold' (Vpá, sts. 7, 8). This was, then, the golden age of Paradise. In the new world of the remote future, the Asir shall again assemble on Ida-plain, and there the golden 'tables,' which in the morning of time they had possessed, they shall find lying in the grass (Vpá, Cod. Reg., sts. 57, 58).

For the name *á Þavelli* (with short *i*), *Völuspá* is our only authority. This word contains a reconstruction of the name *Eden*, which name the heathen Scandinavians heard in England from Christian Englishmen. *Ed-* in *Eden* was reproduced by *Þð-*, because of the relation between A.S. *ed-*, 'again,' and the corresponding O.N. *Þð-*. The Scandinavians doubtless connected *Þavollr* as the name of the place where the gods shall assemble in the new (A.S. *ed-ntwe*) world with the O.N. *Þð-*, 'again.' The *-n* in *Eden* doubtless fell away because the name was treated as an A.S. form (e.g. a genitive) in *-au*, to which corresponded an O.N. form in *-a*. Thus A.S. *eorcnanstan* was changed in O.N. into *jarknasteinn*. The second part of *Þavollr*, viz. *vollr*, 'plain,' corresponds in meaning to A.S. *wong*, which was used of Paradise. In like manner the Norwegian place-name *Leikvangr* has been changed in modern times into *Leikvoll*.<sup>1</sup>

In the description of the first eras of the world in

<sup>1</sup> See Rygh, *Norske Gaardnavne*, II, 271. O.N. *grasvöllr* is synonymous with A.S. *gærswong*, O.N. *vígavöllr* with A.S. *wigwong*.

## INTRODUCTION

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*Völuspá*, there are, as E. H. Meyer has pointed out, several agreements in poetic phraseology with A.S. poems. In *Vpá.*, 8, we read of the gods in the morning of time: *var þeim vettergis vant ör gulli*, 'they lacked nothing from gold.' In the A.S. poem, 'The Wonders of Creation,'<sup>1</sup> we read of the blessed who dwell with God: *nis him wihte won*, etc., 'they lack nothing.' Of the first ages of the world, we find in *Vpá.*, 3: *jörð fannsk æva*, . . . *en gras hvergi*, and in st. 4: *þá var grund gróin | grænum lauki*; compare A.S.: *Folde wæs þá gyt || græs ungréne*, *Genesis*, 116 f. With *Vpá.*, 5: *máni þat ne vissi | hvat hann megins átti*, || *stjornur þat ne vissu*, | *hvar þær staði áttu*, compare A.S.: *þonne stedellæse steorran hréosað* || . . . *ne se mōna næfð nānne mihte wiht*, in the poem on the Day of Judgment,<sup>2</sup> of the year 971.

These agreements are certainly not accidental. They are easily explained on the theory that *Völuspá* was composed by a Norseman in England under the influence of English poems, though not exactly those here quoted.

In the passage dealing with the occupation of the gods on Ida-plain, are used the words *teflðu*, 'they played tables,' *teflur*, 'tables.' According to *Rígsþula*, Earl's sons learn to play *tafl*. These words (which became familiar throughout the North), though ultimately of Latin origin, were derived, at all events in part, from England. A.S. *tæfl* translates Lat. *alea*; *tæflan* means 'to play.'

With reference to the building of altars or temples,

<sup>1</sup> Grein<sup>1</sup>, 1, 215, v. 95, from the Exeter Book.

<sup>2</sup> Ed. Lumby, v. 106.

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the word *hátimbra* is used in *Völuspá* and in *Grimnismál* (16). As far as its composition is concerned, it could be genuine Norse; but while it does not occur elsewhere in Norse, we find pretty often in A.S. *héahgetimbru*, 'high buildings,' particularly of Heaven, with gen. pl. *héahtimbra*, and the participle *héahtimbrod*. In Old High German *hōhgizimbri* is explained by 'pergama, capitolia.'

The theory that it was in the West that the Norse poet sang, in *Völuspá*, of the first eras of the world, is strengthened by the fact that he uses an Irish word. In *Vpá.*, 4, he calls the earth and the other component parts of the world *bjǫðum* (dat. pl.), which is borrowed from Irish *bioth, bith*, 'world.' In later Icelandic poems, *bjǫð* was adopted from *Völuspá* and used in the meaning 'earth,' e.g., by the skald Kormak (note the Irish name) who was on a warlike expedition in Scotland, and who uses several Irish and English words.

Towards the end of *Völuspá*, the influence of Christian conceptions becomes still more evident. I will call attention to certain bits of linguistic testimony which show that these conceptions were taken from Christian Anglo-Saxons.

We have indisputable evidence of this fact, as has often been pointed out, in the last strophe of the poem: *þar kemr enn dimmi dreki fljigandi*, 'there comes the dark dragon flying'; for *dreki* is certainly a foreign word. Nor can it be doubted that the word in *Völuspá* is due to English influence; for A.S. *draca*<sup>1</sup> occurs

<sup>1</sup> Northumbrian *draca* (Pogatscher, p. 118). In O.N. *dreki*, the *e* probably arose from *a* through the influence of *-ki*, and from *dreki* it was transferred to *dreka*.

earlier in English than the corresponding word in Old Norse. And, moreover, a 'flying dragon' plays an important part in the national epic *Béowulf*.

The A.S. *draca* is, in its turn, taken from Lat. *draco*; but the context in which the word dragon occurs in the last strophe of *Völuspá* shows that *dreki* in this passage has nothing to do with *draco* in the Latin sense of 'the standard of a cohort.' In *Vpá.*, we read: 'There comes the gloomy dragon flying, the shining serpent, up from "Nitha-fells"; with corpses on his wings, *Níðhoggr* flies over the plain; now shall he sink.' Here, then, the dragon comes up from the deep with corpses on his wings. Down below he has torn to pieces the bodies of the wicked. But this idea of dragons tearing to pieces the bodies of the wicked is, as I have shown in the First Series of my Studies (pp. 453 ff), a Christian conception which in the Middle Ages was well known in western Europe, and therefore in Ireland and England.

After the Sibyl has described the renewed earth and the splendid dwellings of the good in Gimlé, and after she has proclaimed that the Mighty One shall come, she announces in conclusion that she sees the dragon rise from the deep, only to sink for ever. E. H. Meyer<sup>1</sup> thinks that this vision is based on the prediction of St. John (Rev. xx. 1-3) that 'the dragon, that old serpent,' after having been cast into the bottomless pit, and bound a thousand years, 'must be loosed a little season.' This seems to me possible, although the statement in *Völuspá* that *Níðhoggr* sucks bodies on *Ná-strandir* (i.e. Corpse-strands), has its origin in other conceptions than those

<sup>1</sup> *Völuspá*, p. 205.

regarding the dragon in the above-cited passage from the Apocalypse.

We read that the dragon comes flying *frá Niðafjellum*. This, I believe, means 'from the fells (mountains) below, in the deep,' even as the designation of the place where a golden hall stands, viz. *á Niðavollum*, Vpá., 37, means 'on plains in the deep.' The word is to be explained by the A.S. *nið*, neut., 'deep, abyss.'<sup>1</sup>

There is another word in the Sibyl's description of the last ages of the world which betrays definite Christian influence from England.

The hall, fairer than the sun, thatched with gold, in which the good and upright shall dwell in the renewed world and enjoy gladness for ever, is said to be *í Gimlé*, i.e. 'the secure home adorned with precious stones.' The last part of the word is *hlé*, 'shelter, protection.' The place cannot have received its name *Gimlé* before the Scandinavians had borrowed their word *gimr* (masc., in Vkv.), as in *gimsteinn*, 'precious stone,' from Englishmen who had themselves borrowed it (A.S. *gim*, *gimm*, masc.) from Lat. *gemma*, most likely through the Irish *gemm*. Thus, since the name *Gimlé* necessarily presupposes influence from Christian peoples, we have every reason to find in this home of the righteous in the new world, 'Gem-shelter,' the hall of which is

<sup>1</sup> This occurs in *Satan*, 634: *schífað tð grunde in þæt nearwe nið*, and in *Beowulf* also. Usually *frá Niðafjellum* is explained as 'from the dark fells,' from *nið*, 'dark'; but in that case one would expect *Niðjafjellum*, following the dative *niðjom* in Vpá., 6. In the second place, *nið*, 'the time when the moon does not shine,' points to a temporary darkness, which does not suit the passage. Thirdly, the hall spoken of in Vpá., 37, would scarcely have been imagined as golden if it had stood on plains where pitch darkness reigned.

fairer than the sun and thatched with gold, a reproduction, altered by passing through several intermediaries, of the holy Jerusalem of which St. John says (Rev. xxi. 11 ff): 'Her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.' 'And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones.' 'And the street of the city was pure gold.' 'And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it.'

The statement in the Scandinavian poet, that the hall in Gimlé is 'thatched with gold,' is even closer to a passage in Gregory the Great (*Dial.* iv., chap. 36), who in a vision says that in Paradise are to be seen various resplendent dwellings, in the midst of them a shining house with golden tiles.

We have a reflection of the holy Jerusalem in several German works also; among others in the following description by a M.H.G. poet: 'In the kingdom of heaven stands a house. A golden road leads to it. The pillars are of marble; Our Lord adorns them with precious stones.'

Other evidence that outside of Scandinavia the holy Jerusalem of the Apocalypse became a heathen Paradise, may be seen in the story of how the devil shows Radbot, King of the Frisians, a golden house in which he shall dwell if he will not give up the heathen faith: the house shines like gold, and before it is a street paved with gold and precious stones.

As examples of how the most important Old Norse

mythological stories, as we know them from the Eddic poems and from Snorri's Edda, arose under the profound influence of Jewish-Christian tales which the Scandinavians heard among the English and Irish, I shall now briefly examine some of the leading features of the stories of Baldr and Loki.

## BALDR.

The myth of Baldr appears in its chief features in several Eddic poems, especially in *Völuspá*, but is most complete in *Gylfaginning*. In the form in which it is preserved in these Old Norse sources, it seems to be a reconstruction of an older myth, more epic in character, of which we seem to have a weak echo, a modernised and localised imitation, corrupt in many respects, in the story of Hotherus and Balderus in Saxo Grammaticus. I shall not attempt to explain here the origin of Saxo's story, or of the more epic myth of Baldr. I shall deal only with the ancient Old Norse traditions concerning him.

In them Baldr, pure and spotless, is represented as the god of innocence in the midst of the other gods, where a still more benign light is thrown upon him by contrast with the dark figure of Loki. All that is not connected with Baldr's death is here made subordinate, or entirely omitted, while his fall is made particularly prominent and presented with dramatic vividness, becoming the very turning-point in the whole history of the world. In this reconstruction of the epic myth, we see a strong tendency everywhere manifest to lay the chief stress on the fundamental moral elements of life. In my opinion, this new form of the Baldr-story is due

to the powerful influence exerted by English and Irish Christianity on the heathen Norsemen in the West. These Norsemen transferred the stories they heard in the West about Christ, the Son of God, to Baldr, the son of their highest god Odin—yet not without change; they transformed them, with the aid of their vivid, creative imaginations, in accordance with special heathen Scandinavian conceptions, so that the new myths thus formed became genuinely national in character.

The identification of Baldr with Christ may be the reason why no deed of this son of Odin is celebrated in song or story. His personality only is described; of his activity in life almost no external trait is recorded. All the stress is laid upon his death; and, like Christ, Baldr dies in his youth.

In *Völuspá*, the Sibyl first mentions Baldr when she predicts his death. She begins her utterances regarding him with the following words (Cod. Reg., st. 32):

*Ek sá Baldri  
'blóðgom tívor'  
Óðins barni  
þrlog fylgin.*

'I saw fate (*i.e.* death) decreed for Baldr . . . Odin's son.' The Icelanders in the Middle Ages, and even the author of this poem himself, probably understood the expression *blóðgom tívor* of Baldr as 'the bloody god,' and connected *tívor* with *tívar*, 'gods';<sup>1</sup> but this

<sup>1</sup> Compare the expression *fróðgum tífi* (*tífu* in Codex Wormianus) in the poem *Haustlong* in Snorri's Edda, I, 310. This expression seems to have been chosen by the poet because *blóðgom tívor* echoed in his ear. I regard the poem *Haustlong* as later than *Völuspá*.



interpretation cannot, in my opinion, be what was originally intended by the expression.<sup>1</sup>

The word *tívor* is unmistakably borrowed from English. It is the Anglo-Saxon *tíber*, *tífer*, neut., 'a sacrifice, victim.'<sup>2</sup> From the fact that it is usually written *tíber* with *b*, seldom *tífer*, and that it has a long vowel, I infer that the word is a compound. A.S. *tíber* is a later form of \**tíbor*, as *eofer* of *eofor*. I explain the word as derived from an old Germanic *tūvabra* alongside \**tūwabora*, 'what is borne forward to the gods,' formed like Gothic *gabaur*, 'tax.'<sup>3</sup> By dissimilation, *tūvabra* was contracted into \**tíbra*.

Now, 'bloody' is a natural epithet to apply to a sacrifice. It seems to me certain, therefore, that the expression *blóðgom tívor* used of Baldr in *Völuspá* was taken from the expression *blóðig tíbor* (= *tíber*), 'the bloody sacrifice,' in some Northumbrian poem.

This circumstance, in my opinion, supports the view that *Völuspá* was composed by a Norwegian in Northern England, in a district where both English and Norse were spoken. It leads us to believe, also, that at any rate some of the lines of *Völuspá* were formed under

<sup>1</sup> There is not sufficient analogy for the derivation of *tívor* from the stem *tíwa-*, 'god.' If the word were very old in Norse, *w* would have fallen out before *o*. It would also be remarkable if *blóðgom* were here used in anticipation, although we do find in *Beowulf*, 2439: *his mæg ofscæt, bróðor ððerne, blóðigan gære*. Müllenhoff's change of *blóðgom* to *blauðgom* is extremely unhappy; for he thus applies to the god an expression which the ancients would have regarded as *goðgá*, 'blasphemy.'

<sup>2</sup> This comparison has already been made by J. Grimm, *Deutsche Myth.*<sup>2</sup>, 177, note 209, and Vigfusson, *Corp. Poet. Bor.*, II, 643, 648. Sievers has shown that *tíber* has a long *i*.

<sup>3</sup> In O.H.G. *zebar*, 'sacrificium, hostia, victima,' short *e* has developed out of short *i*; and short *i* has taken the place of long *i* before *br*,

the influence of English verse. Of course, *Völuspá* cannot be, in its entirety, a redaction of an English poem; for while *Völuspá* is heathen in appearance, the Anglo-Saxon inhabitants of Northern England in the period in question were Christian. But that does not prevent *Völuspá* from being at bottom an imitation of an English poem; and we may even believe that in some parts it may have kept fairly near to its model, and have reproduced almost literally certain of the expressions of the latter. Furthermore, from a mythological point of view, it is highly significant that the expression *blóðgom títvör* is a reproduction of an English expression which meant 'the bloody sacrifice'; for, as I have said, at the time when *Völuspá* was composed, the English were Christians. The phrase *blóðig títbor* cannot, therefore, have been used by them of a heathen god, but must have referred to Christ, the God of the Christians. This becomes still more evident if we observe that Germanic heathendom, when uninfluenced by Christianity, had no conception of any god as a bloody sacrifice. Indeed, the English expression, *blóðig títbor*, 'the bloody sacrifice,' follows naturally from the way in which Christ's death was regarded in the Christian Middle Ages, and agrees with the Christian way of speaking of the Redeemer. In the Epistle to the Ephesians, v. 2, as regularly in the Middle Ages, Christ, is designated as *hostia*; in a hymn, *Crux benedicta*, of Venantius Fortunatus, and in many other places, as *victima*. And whenever the conception of Christ as a sacrifice or 'Lamb of God' is presented in the Middle Ages, the *blood* of Christ is invariably dwelt upon (as, e.g., in *Old Eng. Homilies*, 279, *þat blisfule*

*blóði bóði*, where the same adjective is used that we find in *Völuspá*).

Now in *Völuspá* we find *Baldri* alliterating with *blóðgom tívor*. May we not, in the light of what precedes, infer that in the lost North-English Christian poem from which *Völuspá* here borrowed, *baldor* in like manner alliterated with *blóðig tíbor*, 'the bloody sacrifice'? In the Christian English poem, *baldor*, of course, was not used of Baldr, the god of the heathen, but must have signified 'lord,' *i.e.* the Lord of the Christians, Christ, even as He is called in the A.S. poem *Andreas* (547), *þéoda bealdor*.

In *Völuspá* we have, therefore, evidence that the conception of a god who was offered up as a bloody sacrifice was transferred from Christ, the God of the English Christians, to Baldr, the god of the heathen Norsemen.

Baldr's slayer is called *Hqðr* in all Scandinavian sources. The account of his evil deed is given most fully in *Gylfaginning*. In Snorri's Edda, Hqth is said to be *blind*. We may infer from *Völuspá* also that Hqth was blind; for that poem likewise represents Loki as the real slayer of Baldr. In Old Norse (Norwegian-Icelandic) mythology Hqth is significant only as being Baldr's slayer, and his blindness must, therefore, be connected with his slaying of Baldr. Hqth's blindness is the outer sign of his inner spiritual blindness: he is not moved by malice, like Loki, but acts without knowing what he does.

In the blind Hqth the Norwegian mythological poets in the West saw the blind Longinus, who pierced Christ. In *Gylfaginning* we read that the blind Hqth



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stands without weapon and inactive in the outermost circle of those who are shooting at Baldr. Then Loki comes to him, begs him to shoot at Baldr, puts a mistletoe into his hand, and directs him where to aim his dart. The dart pierces Baldr, and he falls dead to the earth. *Völuspá* presupposes essentially the same story. In mediæval accounts of the death of Christ, current among the English and Irish, as well as among some other peoples, we are told that the blind Longinus, who is standing near by, or going past, has a lance put into his hand with which to pierce Christ, who is nailed to the cross. Longinus is led forward. One of the company shows him in what direction to aim, and the lance pierces Christ's heart.

It is certain that this story about Longinus is entirely Christian, and has not been in the least affected by the Scandinavian myth. The amazing likeness between the Christian legend of Longinus and the story of Høth can, therefore, be explained only on the theory that the story received its Old Norse form under the influence of the legend.

Baldr is slain by Høth's dart. It was a common belief in the Middle Ages, especially in England and Ireland, that Jesus did not die until pierced by the lance, and that it was the wound of the lance that caused His death.

Loki by his wicked counsel brings about the death of Baldr; and he is, therefore, called *rǫðbani Baldrs*. Loki urges Høth to shoot at Baldr, hands him the mistletoe which alone can harm the sinless god, and shows him in which direction to aim. It is *Lucifer*, as conceived in the Middle Ages, who has thus been



carried over into the Scandinavian mythological world as *Loki*. This I shall endeavour to prove in the following section.

Even as *Loki* by his counsel causes *Baldr's* death, so in the Cornish mystery, 'The Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ,' *Lucifer* says that it is he who induced *Pilate* to slay Our Lord. *Lucifer* often appears in the Middle Ages as the prince of the devils, and thus corresponds to *Satan princeps* in the Gospel of Nicodemus. In the redaction of the second part of this gospel, which was known in England, *Satan princeps* says to *Inferus*, the ruler of the domain of death: 'I sharpened the lance that pierced Jesus.' Similarly, it is *Loki* who prepares the weapon that pierces *Baldr*.

In *Gylfaginning* we read that the gods, before *Høth* was brought forward by *Loki*, stood about the invulnerable *Baldr*. Some shot at him; others struck at him; and still others cast stones at him. This also shows connection with certain features in stories of the death of Christ. In the A.S. poem 'Satan,' Christ says: 'On the rood-tree men pierced me with spears (*gârum*) on the gallows; the young man hewed there' (510-11). And in the A.S. poem 'The Dream of the Holy Rood,' the cross on which Christ is crucified says: 'Everywhere I was wounded with arrows.'

It is to honour *Baldr* that the gods shoot at him. *Loki* says to *Høth*: 'Will you not, like the others, do *Baldr* honour?' In this we may hear an echo of the devilish mockery of the soldiers when they hail the thorn-crowned Christ as their king. In mediæval English writings the mocking is represented as occurring at the same place as the crucifixion.

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Høth pierces Baldr with the *mistletoe*. In *Völuspá* the Sibyl says: 'The mistletoe stood grown-up higher than the level plains (*i.e.* in a tree above the earth), slender and very fair.' The mistletoe changes in Høth's hand into a spear, and thus becomes a deadly weapon.

Neither in Iceland nor in Norway can the mythical motive have arisen that it is from the mistletoe that Baldr gets his death-wound. This plant does not grow in Iceland. In Norway it grows in but a few places, in the south-eastern part, near the present town of Horten. But it has been sufficiently proved that the Norwegians who exerted influence on the formation of the oldest extant mythical poems were from western Norway, not from the south-eastern part of the country. In England, on the other hand, the mistletoe is well known and very widespread. It occupies, moreover, a prominent position in popular superstition. It has the same name in Anglo-Saxon as in Old Norse (A.S. *misteltdn*, O.N. *mistelteinn*). In the west of England the superstition is current even now that the cross was made of mistletoe, which at the time of Christ was a fair tree in the forest, but which was cursed because of the evil use to which it had been put, and condemned to live ever afterwards as an insignificant plant. We may, therefore, suppose that the Norwegians who first told how Baldr was pierced by the mistletoe, and through whom the account heard by the author of *Völuspá* spread itself in tradition, lived in England, and fashioned that mythical incident under the influence of English superstitions about the mistletoe.

The story about the mistletoe in the prose *Gylfaginn*-

*ningr* is based on older verses. When Baldr dreamed that his life was in danger, Frigg made the trees, and all other things in Nature, swear an oath not to harm Baldr; but a slender sapling which grew west of Valhöll she regarded as so harmless that she did not demand an oath from it. Loki, hearing this, tore up the mistletoe, bore it into the assembly of the gods, and with it Baldr was slain. This story, as Konrad Hofmann first pointed out, is amazingly like a legend of the death of Jesus in a Jewish work of the Middle Ages, though it has not yet been possible to trace the historical connection between the Norse and the Jewish narratives. This work, *Toledóth Jeschu*, which has been ascribed to the thirteenth century, is in reality much older than *Völuspá*.<sup>1</sup> In it we are told that Jesus, aware of the danger which threatened His life, required an oath from every tree except a big stalk that grew in Judas's garden. Judas brings this stalk to the assembly of the Jews, and on it Jesus is hanged.

Even as Baldr *dreams* of a danger which threatens his life and tells his dreams to Frigg and the other gods, so in a mediæval Danish ballad on the sufferings of Jesus, 'the Son sits on the mother's knees and says out of his dreams: I dreamed a dream last night, that the Jews will condemn me.' This feature in the Danish ballad is not to be explained as due to the influence of the Baldr myth; it has developed from the statement, which we also find in the Middle Ages outside of Scandinavia, that Jesus tells his mother of his impending crucifixion.

<sup>1</sup> See Karpele, *Gesch. d. Jüd. Lit.*, 1, 397, and E. H. Meyer, *Völuspá*, p. 157.

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It was the best of the gods who was pierced by the mistletoe. In *Gylfaginning* we read of Baldr: 'He is the best, and him all praise. He is so fair and radiant that light shines from him.' And the whitest of all plants<sup>1</sup> is compared with Baldr's eye-lashes. In this Scandinavian description of the highest god's son, we seem to have a reflection of the holy light with which the Christians surrounded, in pictures, the Son of God, the 'white' Christ (*Hvítakristr*). In the Middle Ages Jesus was represented as the whitest of all human beings, with golden hair; in body also he was without spot.

Of Baldr's dwelling *Breiðablik* (i.e. 'what gleams far and wide'), we read in *Grímnismál*:

*á því landi  
er ek liggja veit  
fæsta feiknstafi,*

which is reproduced in *Gylfaginning* as follows: 'in that place can be nothing impure.' This agrees literally with what we read in Rev. xxi. 27, of the New Jerusalem: 'And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth.'

Baldr, like Christ, visited Hel(1), the abode of the dead.

As punishment for Baldr's death, Loki was taken and bound, not to be loosed until the end of the world. This is connected with statements in Christian narratives from the Middle Ages, that Lucifer lies bound in darkness for ever. We are told that when

<sup>1</sup> Namely, the flower *Baldersbrá* (*Anthemis cotula* and *Matricaria inodora*), which are still called by the name *Baldeyebrow* in northern England.



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Christ descended into the place of departed spirits, He seized the devil and bound him, so that he still lies bound in hell. In *Völuspá* the Sibyl says:

*Hapt sá hon liggja . . .  
lægjarns líki  
Loka áþekkjian ;  
þar sitr Sigyn  
þeygi um sínum  
ver velglýfuð.*

‘She saw a fettered man lie, like unto Loki in appearance; there Sigyn sits over her husband, but not very glad.’<sup>1</sup> In *Gylfaginning* we are told that Loki’s wife Sigyn sits beside him and holds a cup under the drops of poison which drip from the serpent placed over him. When the cup is full, Sigyn empties it; but while she is thus occupied the poison drips on Loki’s face. It is worthy of note that we find this mythical picture, in all probability for the first time, in England and on a Christian monument. The Gosforth Cross in Cumberland seems to date from the ninth century (or, at the latest, from about 900), and is certainly older than the poem *Völuspá*. On the west side of this cross may be seen<sup>2</sup> a woman sitting over a fettered man. She is holding a cup in her hand in such a position that she appears to be pouring out its contents. The man is lying on his back, bound hand and foot, as it seems, to a rock. Close to the man’s head may be seen the head of a snake.

<sup>1</sup> In the poem *Haustlög* also, Sigyn is named as Loki’s wife; but that poem is, in my opinion, later than *Völuspá*.

<sup>2</sup> See the drawing given by Stephens in *Aarbøger for nordisk Oldkyndighed*, 1884, pp. 19 and 23.



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Every one who is familiar with Scandinavian mythology must be reminded by this carving of Sigyn sitting beside, or over, the bound Loki. The same cross on which this scene is found also represents, among other things, Longinus piercing the crucified Christ with his lance so that blood flows from the wound. The carvings on this monument argue, then, for the view that the author of *Völuspá* heard in northern England the story of Loki and Sigyn, or verses which treated that story. He may possibly have seen the Gosforth Cross himself, and have been told the story of Loki and Sigyn in explanation of the scenes carved thereon.

In Codex Regius of *Völuspá*, the section on Baldr's death and Loki's punishment is placed directly before the strophes on the places of torment of the dead, after which come the omens preceding the end of the world (*Ragnarøk*); and the text of the same poem in *Hauksbók*, which contains nothing about Baldr's death, mentions Loki's punishment directly before the announcement of Ragnarøk. Similarly, in a Sibylline oracle, Jesus, and His death, descent into the lower world, and resurrection, are spoken of directly before the statements regarding the destruction of the world by fire.

I do not lay any stress on the fact that the Sibyl in *Völuspá* dwells upon Frigg's weeping for the death of her son Baldr, even as Christian accounts from the Middle Ages make very prominent the sorrow of the weeping Mary at the cross on which her son hangs crucified. It is of much more importance that *all creatures wept over Baldr* to get him back from the world of the dead : men and animals, earth and stones,

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trees and all metals. This has its model in Old English poems on the death of Christ. In the A.S. poem on the Holy Rood, we read: '*All creation wept (wēop)*'; they lamented the fall of the king. Christ was on the cross.' The same conception is expressed more fully in Cynewulf's *Crist*: 'They saw the mute creation, the green earth, and the high heaven with fear feel the sufferings of the Lord, and, full of sorrow, they lamented, though they had no life, when the wicked men seized the Creator with sinful hands' (1128 ff). 'And the trees also acknowledged who created them with abundant foliage, when the mighty God ascended one of them, and here suffered anguish for the benefit of men, loathsome death for the help of mankind: then many a tree under the heavens became wet with bloody tears, red and thick; sap was turned into blood' (1170 ff).

Cynewulf took the idea that mute creation bore witness at Christ's death to His divinity from the tenth homily of Gregory the Great, which was composed in 592, or thereabouts. And even as the English poem on the Holy Rood says that 'all creation wept (or, uttered sounds of grief, *wēop*)' when Christ was on the cross, so Leo the Great (who was Pope from 440 to 461), represents Nature as lamenting over the sufferings of the Redeemer on the cross, and in this connection uses the expression *universa creatura congemuit*. Moreover, in the Irish poem *Saltair na rann*, v. 7765, we read that at the crucifixion 'every creature wailed.'

Cynewulf contrasts with the sorrowing and weeping creation 'the blind men harder than stone,' who could not recognise that the Lord had saved them from



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torment. 'For this inheritance they gave their lord no thanks (*þanc*).' In the Scandinavian myth, in contrast to weeping creation, is placed the wicked Loki, who, transformed into a witch in a cave, weeps dry tears for Baldr, and says that he has not enjoyed any benefit from Odin's son. This witch is called *Thanks* (*þökk*), i.e. the unthankfulness of the wicked.

Cynewulf tells us that the earth trembled at the death of Christ. In *Saltair na rann* we read that 'heaven and earth trembled: the sea proceeded to go over its bounds.' All lands trembled when the ship on which Baldr's body lay left the shore.

Before Baldr was laid on the bale-fire, Odin whispered something in his son's ear. Two Old Norse mythological poems emphasise, in conclusion, the fact that no one knows what he said, except Odin alone. This conception may perhaps be the echo of two places in the New Testament. In the twelfth chapter of St. John's Gospel, we read that when Jesus had come to Jerusalem to be crucified, He said: 'Father, glorify Thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again. The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him' (28 ff). And in Matthew xxiv. 36, Jesus says: 'But of that day and hour [when Heaven and Earth shall pass away] knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.'

The Saviour, who is risen from the dead, shall some time come again in His glory. Baldr is some time to return from the abode of the dead to the restored earth.

The name that Odin's son bore in the Scandinavian

epic story which preceded the Eddic account, namely *Baldr*, contributed in large measure to the later transference to him of stories of the Christian God ; for this name *Baldr* was etymologically the same as the Anglo-Saxon appellative *bealdor*, 'the lord,' by which the God of the Christians could be designated in Anglo-Saxon.

#### LOKI, FENRIR, VÍTHAR, MITHGARTHSORM.

LOKI is a mythical personage known only to the Scandinavians ; the myths of the heathen English and German races have no mention of his name. Loki was created at the end of the heathen period by Scandinavians in the West, after they had heard Jewish-Christian tales from Christian peoples.

The Scandinavians who formed the name *Loki* may have interpreted it as 'the closer,' 'he who ends, finishes,' and have regarded it as a derivative of the verb *lúka*, 'to close, end, finish.' But this name *Loki*, 'the closer,' was, in my opinion, a reconstruction of the foreign name *Lucifer*, instead of which we often find in the Middle Ages among certain peoples (*e.g.* the Irish) the form *Lucifur*. This form of the name was probably regarded by Christians in the West, from whom the Scandinavians got the name, as *Luci fur*, *i.e.* 'the thief Luci' ; and this suggested the shorter Scandinavian form *Loki*. The Loki of Old Norse mythology is called 'a thief,' and there are many stories about what he stole.

Loki was handsome in appearance. This is explained by statements of English and Irish Christians regarding Lucifer. The prince of the fallen angels received, in the Middle Ages, the name *Lucifer*, 'Light-bringer,'

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*i.e.* the morning-star, because to him were transferred the words of Isaiah xiv. 12: 'How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!' Among Anglo-Saxons and Irishmen, *Lucifer* was the name regularly given to the prince of the fallen angels. In accordance with this name it was thought that the prince of the fallen angels was a fair and radiant person. The Scandinavians retained, along with the name *Loki*, which was a reconstruction of *Lucifer*, the conception of the demon's exterior implied in the name *Lucifer*. The Icelandic *Martu Saga* (Saga of the Virgin Mary) uses, with reference to Lucifer before the fall, the same adjectives, *fagr* and *fríðr*, that are used of Loki in Snorri's Edda.

In *Lokasenna*, Loki, in Ægir's hall, reminds Odin that in the morning of time they two had mingled their blood together and had become sworn brothers. This may be a reminiscence of the idea that God the Father, in the beginning of the ages, before man was created, made Lucifer chief in his hall, the prince of all angels—an idea to be found, for example, in the Northumbrian poem *Cursor Mundi*.

According to the common account among the Christian Anglo-Saxons in the Middle Ages, the prince of the angels was transformed at his fall into a devil, and was afterwards bound. Terrible pictures were drawn of his external appearance. In the mythical tales of the Scandinavians, this Christian idea regarding the devil was partly transferred to Loki's double among the giants, *Útgardaloki*. In Saxo Grammaticus, *Ugarthilocus* is represented as sitting, with iron fetters on his hands and feet, in a

hideous and filthy cavern, before which are a swarm of venomous serpents. Each of his stinking hairs projects like a horn. Thorkil and his companions pluck out one of these. We are here reminded of the popular stories of how a hair is drawn from the head of the devil.

The connection between Loki and Lucifer is supported by the fact that Loki is one of three brothers—the other two being *Býleistr* and *Helblindi*. In the same way, in the Christian Middle Ages, three devils often appear together, Lucifer, Beelzebub, and Satan, and these three are often described as brothers. In the Middle Ages Beelzebub was often called, in the British Isles, *Beelzebuth* or *Belzefuth*. Of this *Býleistr*, or *Býleiftr*, the name of Loki's brother, is a reconstruction. Since the name *Beelzebuth* was explained as 'the lord of flies,' and since it was believed that the devil could appear in the form of a fly, the name was interpreted by popular etymology in England as a compound of A.S. *béo* (O.N. *bý*, usually *býflugá*), 'bee'; and the Norsemen therefore reproduced *Beelzebuth*, *Belzefuth* as *Býleistr*, or *Býleiftr*, *Býleiptr*. In forming the second part of the word, they had in mind *leiptr* (fem. and neut.) 'a flash of lightning.' This connection between the Scandinavian demon and a flash of lightning is also apparent in Christian writings; for in the Gospel according to St. Luke, x. 18, we read: 'I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.'

Loki was thought of as the demon of fire. This conception is apparent in the names of his parents: *Fárbauti* 'he who strikes in a dangerous and destructive manner, and *Laufey*, 'foliage-isle,' or *Nál*, 'the needle (on pine trees).' We have, however, further evidence that Loki

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was regarded as the demon of fire in several expressions in use among the Scandinavian peasantry. In Iceland *Loka spanir* was formerly used of 'shavings to light fires with,' and *Lokabrenna* is a name of the dog-star. In Telemarken, Norway, the common people say, '*Lokje* is striking his children,' when there is loud crackling in burning trees.<sup>1</sup> This conception of Loki as the demon of fire is based on the words of St. Luke: 'I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven,' and on the belief of Christian theologians, that the body of the demon consists of fire and air. In the Cornish drama, 'The Creation of the World,' Lucifer says: 'I am the lanthorn of heaven, certainly, like a fire shining.' Loki is also called *Loptr*, i.e. 'air.'

The second of Loki's brothers is named *Helblindi*. In like manner the devil, in the Middle Ages, is often called *blind*, and the Anglo-Saxons used many names for the devil that begin with *helle*-.

Loki, like the devil, can transform himself into a woman and into a fly. Loki's inner nature and activity are also described in conformity with those of the devil. He is called 'the enemy of the gods,' even as by the Christians the devil was called 'the enemy of God.' Loki is also termed 'the author of misfortune.' The epithet regularly applied to him is *læviss*, 'skilful in finding out how to bring harm upon others'; and this same quality was ascribed by Christian Norwegians in the Middle Ages to the devil, to whom they ascribed *hrekkuvisi*, *prettvisi*. Loki, like the devil,

<sup>1</sup> On Loki as a fire-demon, see A. Kock in *Indogerm. Forsch.*, x, 90-103, where he particularly throws light on the Old Icelandic expression *ganga yfir sem Loki* (corrupted *lok*, Mod. Icel. *logi*) *yfir akra*.



is *slægr*, 'sly.' He is sometimes spoken of as *frumkveði flærðanna*, 'he who first spoke falsehood'—a phrase that sounds like a reproduction of the biblical 'father of lies.' The devil is called in a Christian poem *meistari flærða*, 'master of falsehood.' The peasantry in Jutland call a certain weed 'Loki's oats,' and use the expression, 'Now Loken sows his oats,' of a quivering motion in the air that blinds and confuses the eye. This expression, like that in earlier use in Germany, 'Now the devil is sowing his seed,' is based on the parable as told by St. Matthew (xiii. 38 ff) in which the devil sows the tares, which are 'the children of the wicked one.'

Loki has, however, a double nature. He is one of the Asir, Odin's foster-brother from the earliest times, and an associate of the gods; but his father was a giant (*jötunn*). The bound Loki, who is loosed at the end of the world, is called by the Sibyl *jötunn*. This ascription of a double nature to Loki is due to the transformation of the prince of the angels of light in the Middle Ages into a devil. Satan, the Prince of Hell, is also called *jötunn* in a legendary tale.<sup>1</sup>

That the myth of Loki arose under the influence of Christian statements regarding the devil, also appears from the mythical stories about Loki's children.

Loki begot with the giantess *Angrboða* (i.e. 'she who causes sorrow') three children, who were the worst enemies of the gods—the wolf *Fenrir*, or *Fenrisúlfr*, the *Miðgarðsormr*, and *Hel*, the ruler of the world of the dead.

<sup>1</sup> I may add here that the Scandinavian myth of Loki embodies elements not only from the Christian Lucifer, but also from many other sources, especially from classical stories about Mercury; but I cannot discuss these borrowings in this place.

Forewarned that the wolf Fenrir should be their destruction, and observing how fast he was growing, the gods quickly had him bound. But at the end of the world, in *ragnarøk* or *ragnarøkkr*, Fenrir gets loose from his fetters, and then, in the great final struggle, swallows Odin. *Vöðarr*, Odin's son, avenges his father, and slays the wolf.

This myth is doubtless, as a whole, of independent Scandinavian construction; but it arose under the influence of the mediæval Christian conception of the devil as a wolf<sup>1</sup>—a conception which was common in the Middle Ages.<sup>2</sup> Avitus calls the devil *infernus lupus*. Gregory the Great calls him a soul-robbing wolf. The idea was also familiar in Germany. Dietmar von Merseburg calls the devil *lupus vorax*. In works composed in German, he is called *hellewolf*. The same idea occurs also among the English and Irish.

With the Christian conception of the devil as a wolf, the Scandinavians fused stories of the monster Behemoth, first mentioned in the Book of Job (xl. 4), and regarded in the Middle Ages as one of the forms of the devil.

The binding of the wolf Fenrir is a parallel to the binding of Loki. It has several points of contact with a Finnish tale of the wicked smith who forged a neck-band for the Son of God.<sup>3</sup> Jesus induces the smith,

<sup>1</sup> It is based on Christ's words to His Apostles: 'Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves' (Matt. x. 16).

<sup>2</sup> Compare on this point Alfred Maury, *Essai sur les légendes pieuses du moyen-âge* [1843], p. 162; Jacob Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*<sup>2</sup>, 948, *D.M.*<sup>4</sup>, *Nachträge*, 294 f; Wilhelm Grimm, in Haupt's *Ztsch. f. deut. All.*, xii, 213.

<sup>3</sup> See Bugge, *Studier* (First Series), pp. 384-386, following Julius Krohn.

voluntarily, to put the fetter on his own neck, even as the gods induce Fenrir, voluntarily, to bind himself with the fetter Gleipnir. Both in the Finnish and in the Scandinavian myth, the fetter is made secure by being fastened deep down in the earth. Both the captives yell horribly when they find themselves tricked.

Of the wolf Fenrir we read in an old strophe<sup>1</sup>: 'Two rivers issue from his mouth; one is called *Ván* [*i.e.* Hope], the other *Vll* [*i.e.* Despair].' These names occur among names of rivers as early as in *Grímnismál*, 28, where *Við ok Ván*, as Professor Falk remarks, must be a mistake for *Vll ok Ván*, since *Við* has already occurred in st. 27. From one of these rivers Fenrir gets his name, *Vánargandr*, *i.e.* 'the monster of the River Ván.'

The names of the two rivers, Hope and Despair, show that at the outset this myth must have had a moral significance. Professor Falk, elaborating a suggestion of E. H. Meyer,<sup>2</sup> has shown beyond a doubt that the origin of this mythical feature is due to mediæval Christian statements concerning Behemoth, or the devil. The source of these statements is Job xl. 16 ff, where we read of Behemoth: 'He lieth under the shady trees, in the covert of the reed and fens' (21). 'Behold, he drinketh up a river, and hasteth not: he trusteth that he can draw up Jordan into his mouth' (23).

In the Vision of Tundalus<sup>3</sup> is mentioned the terrible beast Acheron, which is identical with Behemoth, and is

<sup>1</sup> See Bugge's edition of the Elder Edda, p. xxxiii.

<sup>2</sup> *Völuspá*, p. 151 f.

a form in which the devil appeared.<sup>1</sup> 'Of this creation the holy book saith, that it is not marvellous if it swallows the whole stream; and, further, it says that Jordan runs into its mouth. The stream is the name the holy book gives to the heathen folk who enter that animal. But Jordan represents the Christians; for there originated baptism, and this animal will torment and devour them.'<sup>2</sup>

This interpretation agrees with the explanation which Gregory the Great gives of the passage just quoted in the Book of Job. In the Old Norse translation of his homily, we read: 'Thus the Lord spake to the holy Job, when he spake of the old enemy: He shall drink up the river, and he marvels not at it, and he trusteth that Jordan shall fall into his mouth. What does the river signify but the rapid course of human beings, who from their birth move forward unto death, as a river flows from its source into the sea. But Jordan designates baptized mortals; for our Redeemer first consecrated our baptism in its water, when he let himself be baptized in Jordan. The old enemy drank up the river; for he drew the whole race of men into his belly of wickedness from the beginning of the world to the coming of our Saviour, so that few escaped. He drinks up the river and marvels not at it, for it matters little to him if he obtains the unbelievers. But what follows is sad: he trusteth that he can draw up Jordan into his mouth. For he dares also to lay hold of the faithful, after he has obtained the unbelievers.'

<sup>1</sup> According to the O.N. translation in *Duggals leiðla*, chap. vii, in *Heilagra Manna Sögur*, I, 337 f.

<sup>2</sup> *Leifar*, p. 19.

The name *Vil*, 'Despair,' refers to Gregory's interpretation of the stream as a figure for the heathen, those lost beyond redemption. *Ván*, 'Hope,' is Jordan as a designation of the baptized Christians, who have hope of salvation.

In the mythical feature of the two rivers that issue from the mouth of the bound wolf Fenrir, we have a good example of a phenomenon which often manifests itself in the alteration of Jewish-Christian stories into heathen Scandinavian myths: mystical and allegorical features, connected with the dogmas of Christianity, are changed into material parts of a graphic supernatural, or romantic, picture.

Of the bound Fenrir, it is said: 'The wolf yawned fearfully, and exerted himself mightily, and wished to bite the gods. Then they thrust a sword into his mouth. Its hilt touched the lower jaw and its point the upper one; by means of it the jaws of the wolf were spread apart.'<sup>1</sup>

The Norwegian poet Eyvind Skáldaspillir was familiar with this story; for, in a strophe composed after the death of King Hákon the Good in 961,<sup>2</sup> he calls a sword *Fenris varra sparri*, 'that which spreads the lips of Fenrir.'

The idea that Christ keeps the mouth of the bound devil spread open by means of an object stuck into it, was current in the Middle Ages.

In mediæval German works is ascribed to the devil a mouth (*kiuwe*) like a wolf. In a poem on the life

<sup>1</sup> *þat er gómsparri hans*, Snorra Edda, ed. A.M., I, 112=II, 273.

<sup>2</sup> *Heimskringla, Hákonar saga góða*, chap. xxvii.; *Corp. Poet. Boreale*, II, 36, l. 17.

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of Jesus<sup>1</sup> we read: 'When the Lord had bound the monster [the soul-robbing wolf, the devil], he placed a block in its mouth, so that the mouth may stand open, and let out the souls that the monster has swallowed, and so that it may not swallow more.' Here, as in the Scandinavian myth, the monster's jaws are spread apart after it is bound. Another Christian account occurs in the Icelandic MS. *Hauksbók* of the beginning of the fourteenth century.<sup>2</sup> In a section beginning with the words, 'The holy bishop called Augustinus spoke to the men whose priest he was,'<sup>3</sup> we read (p. 32): 'When our Lord penetrated into the realm of the dead and bound the devil, he placed a cross in his mouth and subdued him with it, and bade us by means of that victorious sign to keep off the devil and all evil beings.' This form of the Christian legend seems to have been known in various parts of the North. We may thus explain the figure on a series of Swedish bracteates, usually ascribed to the time of King Sverker (the beginning of the twelfth century), viz. a dragon's head with a cross in the wide-open mouth, as if it were the tongue.<sup>4</sup>

But the heathen Scandinavians also told how Fenrir's mouth was spread apart in another and a different way. At the end of the world Fenrir is represented as escaping from his fetters, and advancing, together

<sup>1</sup> Quoted from Max Dreyer, *Der Teufel in der deutschen Dichtung des Mittelalters*, Rostock, 1884, p. 19.

<sup>2</sup> Fritzner (*Ordbog over det gamle norske sprog*, s.v. *gömsparri*) compared this with the story of Fenrir.

<sup>3</sup> *Nokkur blöð úr Hauksbók*, Reykjavík, 1865, p. 29.

<sup>4</sup> Henry Petersen, *Om Nordboernes Gudedyrkelse og Gudetrol*, p. 79, where a reproduction may be found.

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with other monsters and demons, to give battle to the gods. In Snorri's Edda we read: 'The wolf Fenrir goes with gaping mouth; its upper jaw touches heaven, and its lower one the earth. It would spread its jaw still wider if there were room. Fire issues from its eyes and nostrils.' The wolf meets Odin and swallows him. But thereupon Odin's son Víthar advances against Fenrir. Placing one foot on the wolf's lower jaw, and seizing the upper with one hand, he tears asunder the beast's mouth, and thus causes its death.

In *Vafþrúðnismál* (53) we read: 'The wolf shall swallow the father of mankind (*i.e.* Odin); this Víthar shall revenge. He shall cleave the terrible jaws in the struggle.' In this connection we should observe—first, that in the Middle Ages the devil was called *lupus vorax*, and that he was represented in England 'with gaping mouth,'<sup>1</sup> or 'with burning mouth and flaming eyes.'<sup>2</sup> The account of Fenrir's death just given shows remarkable similarity to a South Slavic story which stands in connection with the teachings of the heretical Bogomiles, and is due ultimately to Byzantine influence. In *Archiv für slavische Philologie*, v, 11 ff, is recorded a Serbian tale, which begins as follows: 'Once Dabog was prince on the earth, and the Lord God in heaven.' (Dabog here corresponds to a being who, according to the Bogomiles, is the creator of matter: Satan, Diabolus, Lucifer.) 'They agreed that the souls of sinful men should fall into the hands of Dabog, and the souls of the just into those of God in heaven. Things went on

<sup>1</sup> Bouterwek, *Cædmon*, p. cxlvii.

<sup>2</sup> *Mid byrnuendum mǫðre and ligenum lágum* (Thorpe, *Homilies*, 11, 164).



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for a long time in this way. At last God became greatly displeased that Dabog obtained so many souls, and He began to consider how He could diminish his power. He could not kill him, for Dabog was quite as powerful as the Lord God in heaven; but to break the agreement was neither possible nor advisable.'

What is here said of an agreement which it was not advisable for the Lord to break, is doubtless connected with the statement in Snorri's Edda (AM. ed., I, 114), that 'the gods valued their sanctuaries and inviolate places (*ve sín ok gríðastaði*) so much that they would not defile them with the blood of the wolf, although it was prophesied that the wolf should slay Odin.'

According to the Serbian tale, the Lord induced Dabog to promise that, if a Son were born to Him, the inheritance of the Son would be restored. When Dabog heard that God had begotten a Son, who was even then on His way to reclaim His inheritance, he endeavoured to swallow Him, and spread his mouth so wide in his rage that *his lower jaw touched the earth and his upper jaw heaven*. But the Son of God drove a lance into his lower jaw, and so fixed it that it also pierced the upper jaw. Even as Dabog's jaws stood when thus spread apart by the Son of God, so they have continued to stand until the present, and so they shall remain for ever. In this Serbian picture of the demon's lower jaw touching the earth while the upper jaw touches heaven, we have exact agreement with the Scandinavian story of Fenrir. To the Son of God in the Serbian story corresponds Víthar in the Scandinavian myth. Just as the former spreads apart the mouth of the demon, so that it remains open ever after,



so Víthar cleaves the mouth of the wolf. The fact that the mouth of the demon in the Serbian tale is kept open by an upright *lance*, while in the Scandinavian tale the mouth of the bound Fenrir is kept open by an upright *sword*, is not a remarkable variation. It was easy enough for 'sword' and 'lance' to change places in the migration of a popular story; for *glaiue*, 'sword,' means, in Old French, 'spear,' and Lat. *framea*, 'lance,' has a later meaning, 'sword.'

A bit of sculpture, which is unmistakably connected with the Scandinavian myth on Víthar's fight with the wolf Fenrir, may be seen on the Gosforth Cross in Cumberland. The exact date of this cross (preserved from the early Middle Ages) has not yet been definitely settled. By comparing it with Irish crosses with dated inscriptions, I have come to the conclusion that it is most likely of the ninth century. On the east side of the Gosforth Cross<sup>1</sup> we see a figure formed by the bodies of two snakes coiled together, with the head of a wolf on each side. Before the wide-open mouth of the head, which turns downwards, a man is standing with a rod in his right hand, and his left hand extended towards the monster's upper jaw, apparently as if to spread the jaws apart. The man's left foot is in the monster's mouth. Evidently he is standing upon the lower jaw.

The agreement between this representation on the Gosforth Cross and the heathen Scandinavian myth of the fight between Víthar and Fenrir is striking, and supports the theory that this myth was shaped under

<sup>1</sup> See the reproduction in *Aarbøger for nordisk Oldkyndighed*, 1884, p. 16.



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the influence of tales of Christians in the British Isles, possibly also under the influence of Christian works of art.

It should be observed that the Gosforth Cross is a Christian monument. But a Christian monument cannot well represent a heathen god as victorious. The carving under discussion does not, then, in my opinion, represent the victory of the god Víthar, but the victory of Christ, the Son of God, over the monster;<sup>1</sup> and this in the Scandinavian myth has been worked over into the victory of Víthar over Fenrir.

This same carving is connected also with the Serbian story, as is evident if we examine the sculpture on the west side.<sup>2</sup> Two monsters may there be seen, side by side, with snake-bodies coiled together and with heads turned downwards. Their lower jaws are turned toward each other, their mouths wide open, and their teeth are like those of ravenous beasts. In his right hand a man is holding a rod before one monster's mouth.

This carving on the Gosforth Cross is, I believe, to be interpreted, in accordance with the Serbian story, as follows:—The figure who is holding upright in his right hand the rod, or pole, is the Son of God. Each of the pointed ends is fastened in one of the jaws of the double-monster. The sculptor probably meant to represent the mouth as kept open by the upright rod, as by the lance in the Serbian story. This intention is not very clear on the Gosforth Cross, because the artist there represented the dragon as double.

<sup>1</sup> E. H. Meyer (*Germ. Myth.*, p. 60) is of the same opinion.

<sup>2</sup> See *Aarbøger f. n. Oldk.*, 1884, p. 22; cf. p. 19.

The historical connection between the Serbian tale, on the one hand, and the carving on the Christian North-English cross, together with the Norse myth, on the other, I explain thus:—The Serbian tale probably goes back, through the Bogomile teachings, to apocryphal Christian representations that were known early in the Middle Ages in Byzantium. These same apocryphal ideas became widespread in the early Middle Ages in western Europe, particularly in England; and in northern England, which had many points of contact with East European Christendom, they were communicated to heathen Norsemen.

In the carving on the east side of the Gosforth Cross, the man who with his left hand is ripping up the monster's mouth, is, at the same time, holding in his right hand an upright rod. I conjecture that this situation represented on the east side is to be regarded as preceding that on the west side, where the man (*i.e.* the Son of God) may be seen thrusting an upright rod, or pole, into the monster's mouth, which is thus kept for ever wide open.

The figures on the Gosforth Cross throw light on the origin and nature of the myth of Víthar.

I have already said that the man there represented, who with his left hand is spreading apart the mouth of the wolf-snake, and with one foot is treading on the monster's jaw, is holding an upright rod in his right hand; and further, that a man on the west side of the same cross is apparently keeping a monster's double mouth open by means of a rod. This rod evidently reproduces the 'rod of iron' of the Revelation of St. John. In Rev. xix. 15, we read: 'And out of his

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mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.' Compare Rev. ii. 26-27: 'And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron.' Also Rev. xii. 5-6: 'And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to His throne. And the woman fled into the wilderness.'

This rod of iron is, I believe, reproduced also in Old Norse mythology. When Thor was on his way to the giant Geirrþóth, he stopped at the house of Víthar's mother, the giantess Gríth. She lent him her rod, *Gríðarvugl*.<sup>1</sup> That this rod was of steel is evident from what is said of it in *þórsdrápa*.<sup>2</sup> Víthar is the avenger of the gods.<sup>3</sup> In Vpá., 55, after Víthar slays the wolf, we read: 'There was his father avenged.' In Vafthr., 53: 'The wolf shall swallow the father of mankind; Víthar shall avenge this.' In Grímn., 17: 'With thicket and high grass is Víthar's land, Víthi, grown; and there the son says from the horse's back that he has courage to avenge his father.' I suggest that this conception of Víthar as an avenger is based on Isaiah lxiii. 4: 'For the day of vengeance is in mine heart.' In the preceding verse we read: 'I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me.'

<sup>1</sup> Snorra Edda, ed. AM., i, 286.

<sup>2</sup> *Málhvettan háf skotnaðra*, st. 6; *stúli*, st. 9; *knútti hlymþél við mól glynja*, st. 6.

<sup>3</sup> *Hann má kalla . . . hefni—ús goðanna*, Snorra Edda, ed. AM., i, 266.

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Grimn., 17, runs as follows :

*Hrísí vex  
ok háu grasi  
Viðars land Viði;  
en þar mǫgr of læzk  
af mars baki  
frækn at hefna sǫður.*

Light is thrown on this passage (translated above)  
by *Hávamál*, 119:

*hrísí vex  
ok háu grasi  
vegr er vatki trǫður.*

‘With thicket and high grass is grown the way, which  
no one treads.’

Víthar, the avenger, dwells, then, in the lonely waste  
inhabited by no man, or god, except himself. The  
name of his land, *Viði*, is derived from *viðr*, forest.<sup>1</sup>  
Víthar is called ‘the silent,’<sup>2</sup> doubtless because he  
inhabits the solitary wilderness where he converses  
with no one.

We have here a masterly picture, entirely Scandi-  
navian in spirit, of Odin’s son meditating vengeance in  
the solitary waste. We can but admire it the more  
when we recognise from what vague hints it developed.

One of these hints may be found in Isaiah lxiii. 3 :  
‘I have trodden the winepress *alone*, and of the heathen

<sup>1</sup> As far as the meaning is concerned, we may compare modern Norw.  
dial., *vi(d)a*, used of ‘the tree-limit, the highest place where trees grow  
on the mountain side’; also, ‘forest land.’ The name *Viði*, with short  
vowel in the first syllable, is etymologically entirely different from the  
name of the god, *Viðarr*, with long *i*.

<sup>2</sup> *Hann má kalla hinn þogla ds* (Snorra Edda, ed. AM., I, 266);  
*Viðars ins þogla* (*id.*, I, 286).

(lit., of the people, *de gentibus*) *there was none with me.*<sup>1</sup> This passage has been brought into connection with the words in Rev. xii. 6, of the woman who has given birth to a man child who is to rule the heathen (*omnes gentes*) with a rod of iron: 'she fled into the solitary wilderness.'<sup>2</sup>

In Vpá, 55, where we read of Víthar's coming to fight against the wolf, Víthar is called 'the great son of the father of victory, i.e. Odin' (*inn mikli mögr Sigföður*). In Grímn., 17, where his vengeance is predicted, he is designated as 'the son.' In Snorri's Edda also, he is called Odin's son. We may trace this epithet back to its starting-point in Rev. xii. 5, where 'he who is to rule all nations with a rod of iron' is called *filius masculus*, and where we read of him: '*raptus est filius eius* (i.e. *mulieris*) *ad Deum et ad thronum eius.*' And this 'son' was taken (for example, by Bede) to refer to Christ, the Son of God. In like manner, Víthar corresponds, as I have already shown, to 'the Son of God' in the Serbian story.

In Grímn., 17, the avenger Víthar speaks from horse-back. According to Rev. xix. 11, he who is to rule all peoples with a rod of iron, 'sat upon a white horse.' The Scandinavian myth represents the silent god as speaking when his time approaches. The remarkable expression in Grímn., 17: 'He himself says (*læsk*) that he shall avenge his father,' may be due to the fact that the avenger, in Isaiah lxiii. 4, speaks in the first person, and says: 'For the day of vengeance is in mine heart,

<sup>1</sup> These words are applied to Víthar by E. H. Meyer, in *Völuspa*, p. 202 f.

<sup>2</sup> *Mulier fugit in solitudinem*; xii. 14: *desertum*.



and the year of my redeemed is come.' When transferred to Víthar, this may have called forth the idea that there shall come a time when he need no longer dwell as a *skógarmaðr*, an exile in the lonely wilderness.

We read of the avenger in Rev. xix. 15: 'and he treadeth (*calcat*) the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.' In Isaiah lxiii. 3-4: 'I have trodden (*calcavi*) the winepress alone, and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread (*calcavi*) them in mine anger, and trample (*conculcavi*) them in my fury. . . . For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.' Even as the avenger here treads down the people with his foot, so in the Middle Ages was applied to the same Son of God the saying that He crushed with His foot the head of the serpent.<sup>1</sup> These words brought it about that the figure on the Gosforth Cross, which represents the Son of God, places his foot in the mouth of the wolf-snake, and that the avenger Víthar treads in Fenrir's mouth.

The shoe that Víthar has on the foot with which he treads in the monster's mouth, is especially mentioned in Snorri's Edda (I, 192). To throw light on this characteristic, E. H. Meyer<sup>2</sup> has with good reason called attention to a passage in Bede (*Opp.*, III, 617) where the historian says (in a symbolical sense) that Christ appeared seeming to have a shoe on his foot.<sup>3</sup> Here

<sup>1</sup> Compare E. H. Meyer, *Völuspá*, pp. 202-204: *Dominus conterens pede caput serpentis.*

<sup>2</sup> *Völuspá*, p. 204.

<sup>3</sup> *Incarnatus vero Dominus veniens quasi calceatus apparuit.*

also the mystical allegory has become, in the Scandinavian myth, part of a graphic material picture.

In Vafthr., 50-51, Odin asks: 'Which of the Asir shall rule over the possessions of the gods when Surt's flame shall be extinguished?' And the giant answers: 'Víthar and Váli shall occupy the dwellings of the gods when Surt's flame shall be quenched.' So far as Víthar is concerned, this conception rests on Rev. ii. 26-27, where the Lord says: 'And he that overcometh, and keepeth (*custodiet*) my works (*opera*) unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron.'

Víthar's mother is the giantess *Griðr*. This name signifies 'passionate violence,'<sup>1</sup> and corresponds in its etymological meaning to the expression *furor irae* in the words of the Apocalypse: *ipse calcet torcular vini furoris irae dei omnipotentis* (Rev. xix. 15). Compare Isaiah lxiii. 3: *calcavi eos in furore meo et conculavi eos in ira mea*. The myth-making imagination of the heathen Norsemen has occasionally isolated the attributes of a god, and made out of them mythical persons who are represented as his relatives. Thus Thor's might (*megin*) and anger (*móðr*) are imagined as his sons *Magni* and *Móði*. In the same way, Víthar's *gríð*, i.e. his *furor irae*, the rage with which he is filled at the moment of vengeance, is represented as his mother *Griðr*. The fact that a mother of the avenger is spoken of in the Apocalypse, probably helped to bring this about. The rod of iron was doubtless called originally *gríðarvölgr*, as being the rod which the avenger used in his rage; but later it was understood as the rod of his

<sup>1</sup> Icel. *gríð* means 'violence, rage.'



mother Gríth. She doubtless kept it for her son's use at the end of the world.<sup>1</sup>

In the Revelation, the mother of the avenger is driven out into the wilderness. Víthar's mother dwelt outside of the world inhabited by gods and men: Thor met her on his journey to the giant Geirrþoth.

I have already hinted, in the preceding remarks on Víthar's fight with Fenrir, that Fenrir, as E. H. Meyer has pointed out, has also adopted peculiarities which belonged to the beast (*bestia*) in Revelation. The imagination of the Scandinavians pictured the wolf Fenrir as the most prominent and the worst of the gods' enemies in *ragnarþekkr*, and represented the father of the gods as setting out against him. Compare Rev. xix. 19: 'And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.' In the strophe of *Völuspá*, which deals with Víthar's fight with the wolf, the latter is called *valdýr*, 'animal of slaughter.' This is a reproduction of *bestia*, of whom we read: 'And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them' (Rev. xiii. 7). In the same strophe, the wolf is called *mógr Hveðrungr*, 'the son of Hvethrung.' *Hveðrungr* is probably a mythical representative of the raging sea.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Compare the altered conception of the name *Darraðarljóð*.

<sup>2</sup> In *Ynglingatal*, Hel is called *Hveðrungrs mör*; but this is, in my opinion, in imitation of *mógr Hveðrungr* in *Völuspá*, both Hel and Fenrir being elsewhere called Loki's children. The mention of *Hveðrungr* among the names of giants in Snorri's Edda (I, 549; II, 470) is likewise easily explained as based on the words just quoted from *Völuspá*. It was probably a misunderstanding of the same passage that occasioned the mention of *Hveðrungr* as a name of Odin, in Snorri's Edda (II, 472, 555).

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Compare A.S. *hweoðerung*, 'murmuratio,' *se brym hweoðerode*, 'the billows roared.' The expression *mogr Hveðrungrs* applied to Fenrir, may, then, be explained by the expression *de mari bestiam ascendentem* (Rev. xiii. 1).

The name *Fenrir*, or *Fenrisúlfr*, has been explained as if it were a genuine Scandinavian derivative of O.N. *fen* in the poetical meaning of that word, viz. 'sea,' and designated the monster as a water-demon. But this explanation cannot be correct; for there does not exist in Old Norse any productive derivative ending *-rir*, gen. *-ris*.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, Fenrir cannot be properly called a water-demon.

I have endeavoured to show that the statements regarding the wolf Fenrir arose under the influence of Christian conceptions of the devil as *lupus infernus*, combined with stories about Behemoth and about the 'beast' in the Apocalypse. In accordance with this theory, I believe that the name *Fenrir*, *Fenrisúlfr*, arose from the foreign *infernus lupus*, as changed in Old Norse by popular etymology. The weakly accented first syllable of *infernus* has fallen off in the Norse name, as in the Old Saxon word *fern*, 'hell,' from Lat. *infernus*, in the *Heliand*. *Fenrir* is formed by means of the derivative ending *-ir*, gen. *-is*, which is very much used in mythical names, among others in giant names. *Fenrir* is an alteration of \**Fernir*. The reason for this alteration is that the Old Norsemen brought *Fenrir*, by popular etymology, into connection with *fen*, in the meaning 'fen, swamp, mire.' The transference of

<sup>1</sup> Words like *elrir*, *Sviðrir*, and others, do not disprove the above statement.

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thought was natural; for hell and the lower world were connected to some extent in the popular imagination with deep or boundless morasses.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the statements regarding Behemoth, in Job xl. 16, that 'he lieth . . . in the covert of the reed, and fens,' may have contributed to this popular etymology.

In Vafthr., 46, 47, *Fenrir* (i.e. wolf of hell) is used to designate the wolf that swallows the sun. Still other features were transferred from Behemoth and *lupus infernus* to the wolf that swallows the sun. In Vpá., 40, 41, the Sibyl says :

*Austr sat en aldna  
í iarnviði  
ok fæddi þar  
Fenris kindir ;  
verðr af þeim qllum  
einna nokkurr  
tungls tjúgari  
í trollz hami.  
Fyllisk fjörvi  
feigra manna, etc.*

'In the east sat the old one, in Ironwood, and gave birth there to Fenrir's brood; of them all a certain one shall become the robber of the gleaming heavenly body in the form of a monster. He fills himself with the bodies of doomed men.'

This account of how the wolf that swallows the sun gorges himself with dead men's bodies (*fjörvi*) is con-

<sup>1</sup> Compare the Danish place-names *Helmose*, *Helkjer*, *palus lethalis* (Saxo, ed. Müller, p. 348). *Die hell ist enmitten dâ daz ertriche aller sumpfigest ist* (Berthold von Regensburg). See E. H. Meyer, *German Mythol.*, p. 173.

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nected with the account in the Serbian tale of how the sinful go into the power of Dabog, and how he has devoured them from time immemorial, just as a German poem represents the devil as devouring souls.<sup>1</sup>

E. H. Meyer calls attention<sup>2</sup> to the statement in the book of Enoch that the monster Behemoth, who is nourished in the east until the day of doom, there shall slay and devour sons and mothers, children and fathers.

While the wolf Fenrir has to some extent its prototype in Behemoth, the Mithgarthsorm has its prototype in Leviathan. In Job xl. Leviathan is associated with Behemoth as a mighty creature similar in nature. In Scandinavian mythical stories, the Mithgarthsorm and the wolf Fenrir appear side by side; they are even represented as brothers. The Icelanders thought of the Mithgarthsorm as lying in the sea, surrounding all lands, and biting its own tail.<sup>3</sup> This conception is taken direct from the Christian conception of Leviathan. Bede<sup>4</sup> says: *Leviathan animal terram complectitur tenetque caudam in ore suo*. In the Christian Middle Ages, the similarity between the Mithgarthsorm and Leviathan was so striking to the Icelanders that they identified the two. Thus in an old book of homilies,<sup>5</sup> we find *miðgarðsormr* written over *leviathan* as a gloss.

The idea of a dragon or snake that coils itself round

<sup>1</sup> The word *fyrrvi* (nom. *fyrr*) does not literally mean 'bodies.' Its significatio is 'life, vital power,' Lat. *anima*, and it corresponds to which sometimes has about the meaning 'soul' (e.g. *nð þou þellagis flæsse bewunden*, Béow., 2424).

<sup>3</sup> *Gylfaginning*, chap. 34.

<sup>5</sup> *Homiliubók*, ed. Wisén, p. 75.

the whole world so completely that it holds its tail in its mouth, appears as early as in the work called *Pistis-Sophia*, which was composed in Ethiopian toward the end of the third century.<sup>1</sup>

According to the Jewish story, God cast the dragon Leviathan into the sea; so, according to Snorri's Edda, the All-father cast the Mithgarthsorm into the sea.

Leviathan was sometimes conceived in the Middle Ages as identical with the evil serpent, the prince of all evil, the devil. In the same way, the Mithgarthsorm was thought of as a form in which the devil appeared. This conception does not occur for the first time in translations of legends, like the *Heilagra Manna Sögur* (II, 4; cf. IO, 20); it is found as early as the tale of the death of Ívar *Víðfaðmi*.<sup>2</sup> Ívar is thus addressed: 'Thou art, I believe, the worst serpent there is, the one that is called Mithgarthsorm.' And, directly after, he is called *þríðni þursinn*, 'mighty monster.' Here the expression, 'thou art the Mithgarthsorm,' is practically equivalent to 'thou art the devil himself.'

In the Middle Ages there was a widespread, oft-recurring conception, allegorical in nature, that Leviathan, *i.e.* the devil, swallowed the bait of Christ's mortal nature, and was caught on the hook of Christ's divinity.<sup>3</sup> This conception we also find in Iceland in Christian times, *e.g.* in the poem *Lilja*, from the middle

<sup>1</sup> See A. Chr. Bang, in (*Norsk*) *Historisk Tidsskrift* (2nd Series), III, 228.

<sup>2</sup> *Fornaldar Sögur*, I, 373.

<sup>3</sup> See Reinhold Köhler, *Germania*, XIII, 158 f; Brøndsted, (*Norsk*) *Hist. Tidsskrift* (2nd Series), III, 21-43; A. Chr. Bang, *id.*, III, 222-232; E. H. Meyer, *Völuspa*, p. 146.

of the fourteenth century, and in the *Homiliubók*, edited by Wisén (p. 75 f). It is this same conception to which the story of Thor's fishing expedition points back: Thor makes ready a stout line, baits the hook with the head of an ox, and casts his line into the sea, where it sinks to the bottom. The Mithgarthsorm swallows the bait. The hook sticks fast in its mouth. Thor draws the serpent up, but it quickly sinks back into the sea.<sup>1</sup>

The story of Thor's fishing expedition was represented in sculpture in the early Middle Ages in England, probably by a Norseman, upon a stone near Gosforth Church in Cumberland.<sup>2</sup> It is connected with the words in Job xli. 1-2: 'Canst thou draw out Leviathan with an hook? or his tongue with a cord which thou lettest down?'

Several old skalds had evidently a special fondness for this story about Thor, and in their treatment of it they laid particular emphasis on the terrible moment when the god fixes his flashing eyes on the serpent, which stares at him and spews out poison. This betrays connection with a mediæval idea that it was God who had the devil in the form of Leviathan, the sea-dragon, on His hook; and we are reminded of the description of Leviathan in Job xli. 19: 'Out of his mouth go burning lamps, and sparks of fire leap out.'

Ulf Uggason<sup>3</sup> says that Thor struck the head of the Mithgarthsorm in the deep. This conception, which was not the usual one, is based on the words of the Old

<sup>1</sup> See Snorra Edda, ed. AM., I, 168-170; *Hymiskviða*, sts. 21-23.

<sup>2</sup> This bit of sculpture is reproduced in *Aarbøger f. nord. Oldk.*, 1884, p. 35.

<sup>3</sup> Snorra Edda, I, 258.



Testament: 'Thou brakest the heads of the dragons in the waters. Thou brakest the heads of Leviathan in pieces' (Psalm lxxiv. 13-14). Compare Isaiah xxvii. 1: 'In that day the Lord, with his sore and great and strong sword, shall punish Leviathan the piercing serpent, even Leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea.' To Thor has thus been ascribed the act of the Christian God.

Instead of the mystical bait, the mortal nature of Christ, the Scandinavians have a purely material, romantic bait; and the Norse poet who heard in the West the parable of God's catching the devil on a hook, and who shaped the myth of Thor's fishing expedition, introduced, therefore, from some other tale the feature that Thor twisted off the head of one of Hýmí's oxen and put its head on the hook as bait.

Of the stories from which several external features in the myth of Thor's fishing expedition are taken, one was probably an old Norwegian romantic tale still preserved among the Lapps.<sup>1</sup> Stories of Hercules also exerted, in my opinion, some influence on the myth under discussion.

In the Norse myth, the Mithgarthsorm appears along with Fenrir in the last struggle at the end of the world—a situation which is due to the influence of Rev. xvi. 13-14, where *draco* is mentioned along with *bestia* and *pseudopropheta* in the prediction that 'the kings of the earth and of the whole world' shall assemble 'to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.'

In the description of *ragnarøkkr*, we read how the

<sup>1</sup> See the story *Jätten og Veslegutten* (The Giant and the Little Boy), from Hammerfest, in Friis, *Lappiske Eventyr og Folkesagn*, p. 49 f.



## INTRODUCTION

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Mithgarthsorm, amid the billows, 'turns itself about in giant-rage' (*snýsk í jötunnmóði*, Vpá., 50). Then the sea rushes in violently over the earth (Snorri's Edda). This description agrees well with that of Leviathan in Job xli. 31-32: 'He maketh the deep to boil like a pot: he maketh the sea like a pot of ointment. He maketh a path to shine after him: one would think the deep to be hoary.'

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Before bringing to an end this introduction to the English edition of my work, I wish to express my thanks to Whitley Stokes, Esq., who for a number of years has given me information of various kinds regarding the Irish language and literature. To my friend Dr. W. H. Schofield I am also grateful for the care and fidelity with which he has done the work of translation.

SOPHUS BUGGE.

CHRISTIANIA, *September* 1898.





# THE HOME OF THE EDDIC POEMS

## I

### INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

IN the old Icelandic Edda-manuscript (of about the year 1270) the Helgi-lays were given first place among those poems properly termed 'heroic.'

The Helgi-cycle comprises the following pieces:

1. *Helgakviða Hundingsbana hin fyrri* (The 'First' Lay of Helgi the Slayer of Hunding, H. H., I);
2. *Helgakviða Hjörvarðssonar* (The Lay of Helgi the Son of Hjörvarth, H. Hj.), which contains both prose and verse;
3. *Helgakviða Hundingsbana önnur* (The 'Second' Lay of Helgi the Slayer of Hunding, H. H., II), which also contains prose as well as verse. While the 'First' Lay of Helgi Hundingsbani closes with Helgi's victory over Høthbrodd, the 'Second' Lay goes farther, giving an account of Helgi's death and of his return from the other world to converse with his loved-one Sigrún, who survived him. All three poems form a single group, not only in respect to 'saga-material,' but also to some extent by reason of similarity in poetic treatment.

As arranged in the MS., the Helgi-lays precede those on Sigurth the Slayer of Fáfnir (*Sigurðr Fáfnisbani*), a prose passage 'On the Death of Sinfjötli' (*Frá dauða Sinfjötla*) forming the transition. With Sigurth both

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heroes called Helgi are in different ways brought into connection.

As to the date of these poems, there is now practical unanimity of opinion. The view held by Keyser and p. 2. Svend Grundtvig that the Eddic poems arose before the discovery and settlement of Iceland, before the days of Harald Fairhair, and even before the early Viking period represented by Ragnar Lothbrók, has been discarded. All Old Norse scholars nowadays agree that no one of the Eddic poems in its present form is older than the end of the ninth century. Several parts of the Helgi-cycle are supposed to have originated in the tenth century; and, as to the First Lay of Helgi Hundingsbani, most scholars share Konrad Maurer's opinion<sup>1</sup> that it is not older than the eleventh century.

On the other hand, the question *where* the Helgi-lays and the rest of the songs of the Elder Edda were composed, is still unsettled. Of late no one has been inclined to accept P. A. Munch's conjecture,<sup>2</sup> that the home of the Helgi-lays is to be found in the Swedish province Gautland, or the opinion defended by Svend Grundtvig,<sup>3</sup> that these lays, as well as the great bulk of Eddic poetry, arose in Danish-Swedish lands, where, in his opinion, Scandinavian culture of the pre-Viking period reached its highest development.

With the single exception of Gudbrand Vigfusson, all modern investigators of Old Norse poetry have held that the poems of the Edda in general (including the

<sup>1</sup> *Ztsch. f. d. Philologie*, 11, 443.

<sup>2</sup> *Det Norske Folks Historie*, 1, 228.

<sup>3</sup> *Om Nordens Gamle Literatur* (1867).

Helgi-lays) were composed by Norsemen (*i.e.* men of the Norwegian-Icelandic nation). Jessen,<sup>1</sup> who distinguishes sharply between the origin of the saga-material contained in the poems and the origin of the poems themselves, holds that not only are the Helgi-lays Norse, but that the story of Helgi the son of Hjorvarth is also Norse, and that it was a Norse poet who brought the Danish story of Helgi the Slayer of Hunding and Hothbrodd into connection with the story of the Volsungs. Axel Olrik seems to be of the opinion<sup>2</sup> that most of the heroic poems in the Elder Edda arose in south-western Norway.

The question has, however, been most closely examined of late by two Icelanders, Finnur Jónsson and p. 3. Björn Magnússon Ólsen.<sup>3</sup> The former holds that the oldest, and indeed the great majority, of the Eddic poems were composed by Norwegians in Norway. In this category of Norwegian poems he puts most of the Helgi-lays, to which he gives the following names: *Volsungakviða en forma* (*i.e.* the Second Lay of Helgi Hundingsbani), *Helgakviða Hjorvarðssonar*, and *Hrímgerðarmál* (*i.e.* the Lay of Hrímgérth, a part of H. Hj. as usually printed). In his opinion *Helgakviða Hundingsbana* (*i.e.* the First Helgi-lay) is the latest of the Helgi-poems, and was composed in Greenland. Björn

<sup>1</sup> *Über die Eddalieder*, in *Ztsch. f. d. Phil.*, vol. III.

<sup>2</sup> See (*Norsk*) *Hist. Tidsskrift*, 3rd Series, III, 188.

<sup>3</sup> F. Jónsson, *Den Oldnorske og Oldislandske Litteraturs Historie*, Cop., 1894 ff; see I, 66, and the treatment of the separate poems. Finnur Jónsson's opinions were opposed by Björn Ólsen in a dissertation *Hvar eru Eddukvæðin til orðin?* in *Tímarit hins íslenska bókmennta fjelags*, Reykjavík, vol. xv (1894). This called forth an article with the same heading by Finnur Jónsson in *Tímarit*, vol. xvi, to which Björn Ólsen replied in the same volume.

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Magnússon Ólsen, on the other hand, defends the theory that the majority of the poems of the Edda (including those on Helgi) were composed by Icelanders.

Gudbrand Vigfusson stood practically alone in his opinions on this subject, and I therefore state his view last. Vigfusson held that most of the groups of Eddic poems, and among them the Helgi-lays, had their origin in the British Isles. He at first sought their home in the northerly islands, the Orkneys, the Hebrides, the Isle of Man. Later, however, he wrote of the Helgi-lays as 'most distinctly southern in character,' and tried to localise them in the islands of the British Channel.<sup>1</sup>

As regards the authors of those Eddic poems to which he ascribed a western origin, Vigfusson was inclined to think that they were 'connected with the *Southern* Scandinavian emigration.' He was of the opinion that they belonged to the stream of people of the races of the Gauts, the Jutes, and the original Vikings (inhabitants of the *Vlk* or land about the Christiania fjord), who went over from the Skage Rack to the British Isles.

- p. 4. Vigfusson's idea was opposed on nearly all sides,<sup>2</sup> and Finnur Jónsson<sup>3</sup> regards it as completely refuted.

In my *Studien über die Entstehung der Nordischen*

<sup>1</sup> See prolegomena to his edition of *Sturlunga Saga*, Oxford, 1878, CLXXXVI ff; *Corpus Poeticum Boreale*, Oxford, 1883, sect. 8, especially 1, lxiii f; *Grimm Centenary*, Oxford-London, 1886, III, 'The Place of the Helgi-lays,' 29-36.

<sup>2</sup> Especially by B. Gröndal in *Tímarit*, 1, 24 ff, and by Edzardi in Paul-Braune, *Beiträge*, VIII, 349-369.

<sup>3</sup> *Litt. Hist.*, 1, 63.

*Götter- und Heldensagen*,<sup>1</sup> I wrote as follows with reference to Vigfusson: 'We may presume that the mythic and heroic stories containing motives taken from the English and Irish flourished earliest among Scandinavians in the West. And it is not improbable that some of the lays which are included in Sæmund's Edda first developed there.' Karl Müllenhoff, the greatest authority in Germany, opposed this theory so strongly as to declare<sup>2</sup> that I had not succeeded in pointing out a single example in the long period of Viking expeditions which plainly showed that foreign material came to the North in the Viking era and was worked over there.

The main object of the present investigation is to clear up the question of the home of the Helgi-lays. It is intended to form the beginning of a series of studies concerning the origin of the poems of the Elder Edda.

## II

### THE HELGI-LAYS IN THEIR RELATION TO LATER OLD NORSE SKALDIC POEMS.

AN examination of certain later Old Norse poems of the Middle Ages, which betray the influence of the Helgi-lays in style and in the use of particular expressions, helps us to determine the history of these lays.

<sup>1</sup> *Studier over de nordiske Gude- og Heltesagns Oprindelse*, Christiania, 1889, the first series of studies of which the present volume is a continuation, translated into German by Professor Oscar Brenner, Munich, 1889, p. 30.

<sup>2</sup> *Deutsche Altertumskunde*, v, 49, 58.

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[For  
pp. 5-10  
see App. I.]

I need not cumber the text here with all the details of the minute investigation necessary to show the extent of this influence. In Appendix I. will be found a full statement of the arguments on which I base the following conclusions:—

p. 10.

1. The Helgi-lays (particularly the First Lay of Helgi Hundingsbani) were known in Iceland as early as the forties in the eleventh century, and from that time on. Various combinations of words and 'kennings' in the poems called *drápur* and *flokkar*, composed in *dróttkvætt*, the usual metre of the court-skalds, by Thjóthólf Arnórsson, Bolverk Arnórsson, Arnór Jarlaskáld, and several other skalds of about the same period, are imitations of expressions in the First Helgi-lay.

2. In the first half of the twelfth century the Helgi-poems were evidently still more admired and enjoyed, for their metrical form and mode of expression were taken as models in the poems written in honour of certain princes by Gísli Illugason and Ívar Ingimundarson.

3. The *Háttalykill* (Key to Versification) composed in the Orkneys about 1145 by Earl Rognvald, in connection with the Icelfander Hall Thórarinsson, gives evidence that in those islands at that time the First Helgi-lay was one of the best-known poems dealing with the heroes of early saga.

### III

#### THE FIRST LAY OF HELGI HUNDINGSBANI IN ITS RELATION TO EARLIER OLD NORSE POEMS.

IN order to be able to follow farther back the history p. 11. of the Helgi-lays, it is important to discover, if possible, what earlier Old Norse poems their authors knew. I confine myself, however, for the time being, to the First Lay of Helgi Hundingsbani, and leave out of consideration here its relation to the Lay of Helgi Hjörvarthsson. The present chapter will be devoted to a discussion of the use of separate words and expressions, and to the conclusions which we can safely draw from them. Later we shall consider the saga-material embodied in these lays.

The First Helgi-lay, which in the old manuscript is called both a 'Poem on Helgi the Slayer of Hunding and Høthbrodd,' and a 'Lay of the Völsungs,' is a poem with continuous narrative in the usual popular epic metre *fornyrðislag*. Beginning with the birth (1-8) and childhood (9) of Helgi, the son of Sigmund, it next tells how Helgi killed Hunding (10) and the sons of Hunding (11-14). After the battle, Sigrún, the poem continues, accompanied by her battle-maidens, comes riding through the air to Helgi (15-17). She tells him that her father Hogni has betrothed her to Høthbrodd, son of Granmar, but that she has declared that she loathes him. Helgi promises to free her from Høthbrodd (18-20). He calls together warriors



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p. 12.      from near and far (21-25), and sails to the land of the sons of Granmar (26-31). Here a gross word-combat takes place between Helgi's brother Sinfjötli and Guthmund, son of Granmar (32-44), to which Helgi puts an end (45-46). Men ride to Høthbrodd to announce the coming of the enemy (47-50). He sends out messengers to collect warriors to aid him (51-52). The battle is described (53). While it is raging the battle-maidens come from the sky (54). Høthbrodd falls. Finally Sigrún congratulates Helgi, saying: 'All hail to thee, since thou hast killed Høthbrodd! Now shalt thou possess me without opposition, rule in peace thy land and kingdom, and enjoy the fruits of victory' (55-56).

Pp. 12-23; see App. II.      This first Helgi-lay is well known to be one of the latest poems in the Elder Edda, the *Gripisspá* and the *Atlamál*, perhaps also the complete *Sigurðarkviða*, being the only heroic poems in the collection which are generally regarded as later. It is full of reminiscences of other Eddic poems.<sup>1</sup>

p. 13.      The author knew the verses of the so-called Second Helgi-lay, and he has throughout imitated the poetic expressions he found there. He knew also the *Völuspá*. This comes out clearly in the word-combat between Guthmund and Sinfjötli, for the retorts in that scene borrow figures and expressions from the mythical world disclosed to us in the prophecies of the Northern Sibyl. In other parts also of the Helgi-lay we find expressions from the *Völuspá*. The opening words: *Ár var alda | þat er—* ('It was formerly in the ages

<sup>1</sup> For a full statement of these imitations see Appendix II.

that—') are an imitation<sup>1</sup> of Vpá. 3. *Ár var alda | þar er* (in the later redaction in Snorri's Edda, *þat er*—). These introductory words are fully justified in the mouth of the sibyl, since she is to tell of the earliest eras of the world, but they have little significance at the beginning of the Helgi-poem.

There are, moreover, expressions in the First Helgi-lay which show that the author knew of the mythic poems, *Grimnismál*, *Rígsþula*, and *Volundarkviða*, and of the heroic poems, *Fáfnismál*, *Brot af Sigurðarkviðu*, *Atlakviða*, *Guðrúnarkvöt*, and possibly *Hamðismál* and *Oddrúnargrátr*.

Probably our poet knew also the *Eiríksmál*, an encomium on Eric Bloodaxe, who fell in England in 954. This poem was composed at the suggestion of Eric's widow, Gunhild, not long after his death, by a Norwegian, who must have lived in Northumberland.

In order to realise how in most of the verses in the p. 22. First Helgi-lay notes may be heard to which our ears are familiar from older Norse lays, although the Helgi-poet has somewhat modified them under the influence of foreign art, we have but to listen to the fresh sound of the Lay of Wayland, in which we cannot recognise the influence of any other Old Norse poem.

From the fact that the author of the First Helgi-lay knew the older Eddic poems which I have named, we can draw a number of inferences as to the circumstances of his life, and as to the time at which he wrote. Such inferences, however, cannot be certain until the place and time of each one of these older poems has been investigated. I shall note briefly but a few of these

<sup>1</sup> See Sijmons in Paul-Braune, *Beiträge*, IV, 173.

probable conclusions, for most of which good reasons have already been given elsewhere.

In the Lay of Wayland we find pictures of nature and life in the most northerly district of Norway, where the author must have lived in his youth. But his lay has an English model. It contains English words, and Frankish and Irish names. He must therefore have travelled in the British Isles.

In the *Reginismál* and in the *Fáfnismál* we find Irish and English words, and there are many things which go to show that the saga-material utilised in these poems was known among Scandinavians living in the West.

In *Rígsþula*, *Konr ungr* (Kon the young), the representative of kingship, is given the name *Rígr* on account of his surpassing merit—this being the name of the mythical founder of his race, and the Irish word for 'king.' We are forced to conclude that the kingdom of which the poet was thinking embraced also Irish subjects, and that he himself lived among Irishmen.

The author of the *Grímnismál*,<sup>1</sup> since he took a story from the northern part of Norway as a setting for his poem, was doubtless born in the district *Hálogaland*. But it looks as if he must have seen the Bewcastle Cross in Cumberland, or one closely resembling it, and must have heard explanations of its sculptured figures. His poem shows the influence of an English legend, and he evidently learned in England many traditions based on Latin writings, partly heathen, partly Christian. The *Grímnismál* must, therefore,

<sup>1</sup> On this and what follows see S. Bugge, *Studien*, 450-64.

have been written by a man who had lived in the northern part of England.

And, finally, the famous *Völuspá*. Fantastic theories as to primitive Germanic mythology have hindered a really historical comprehension of this poem; but the truth cannot be completely hidden: it was in Christian Britain, where the revelations of southern prophets had quickened the souls of men, that the great sibyl of Scandinavian heathendom saw her most splendid visions, and found words in which to make known the fate of the world from the earliest eras to the most remote futurity.

In my opinion, all the Old Norse poems which the author of the Helgi-lay knew point to the life of Scandinavians in the British Isles, especially in the north of England and in Ireland.

#### IV

##### INFLUENCE FROM THE BRITISH ISLES ON THE PHRASEOLOGY OF THE FIRST HELGI-LAY.

CERTAIN linguistic peculiarities and poetic expressions in the First Helgi-lay, which hitherto have not been sufficiently examined, help us to determine where the author lived.

After Helgi's birth is described, we read in H. H., I, 7:—

*sjálfr gekk vísi  
ör vígþrimu  
ungum færa  
ítrlauk grami.*

This passage has been interpreted as follows:—'The king himself (Helgi's father Sigmund) went out of the tumult of battle to bear to the young prince a *magnificent leek*.' Thus the Icelandic scribe of the old MS. doubtless understood it, and so also the author of the p. 24. *Völsungasaga*, for he writes the lines thus: *Sigmundr . . . gekk með einum lauk ímóti syni sínum*, 'Sigmund went with a leek to his son.' But what meaning this 'magnificent leek' can have here, scholars have been unable to decide.<sup>1</sup>

No one has been able to point out any other allusion to a custom by which a father gives his new-born child a 'leek.' And there is still another consideration which awakes our doubts as to the correctness of reading *lauk* in this passage, viz., the fact that the following

<sup>1</sup> In my edition of the *Völs. Saga* (p. 194) I wrote as follows:—'This refers probably to an old custom not spoken of elsewhere: the leek which the chieftain gives his new-born son is probably thought of as a sign that the latter shall grow up to be a famous hero. *Laukr* was considered by the Norsemen as the fairest of all roots: "the leek ranks first among the grasses of the forest," runs the Norwegian ballad on the "Marriage of the Raven" (Landstad, *Norske Folkeviser*, p. 633, st. 31); *laukr í att* signifies in Icelandic "the most distinguished of a race"; men and heroes are constantly likened to leeks.'

In the *Floamannasaga*, 146, a man dreams of the leeks which grow from his knees. They signify his children. Rassmann (*Heldensage*, 1, 76) and Lüning (*Die Edda*) have on the other hand compared *itrlauk* with the old Germanic custom by which a man who transferred a plot of ground to another, gave him a piece of green turf; or, according to the Salic law, *chrenecruda*, translated wrongly by 'reines kraut.' Mannhardt (*German. Mythen*, p. 591, n.) notes that the leek was used in Scandinavia in witchcraft. Finally, I must mention the fact that many have regarded *itrlauk* as a designation of a sword, which old Icelandic poets call otherwise *imunlaukr*, 'battle-leek,' *benlaukr*, 'wound-leek,' etc. Cf. Grimm, *D. Myth.*,<sup>2</sup> p. 1165; E. H. Meyer, *Germ. Myth.*, p. 209; Wimmer, *Oldn. Lesebog*,<sup>3</sup> p. 157. Vigfusson wrongly inserts *imunlauk* in the text (see *C. P. B.*, 1, 490).

strophe begins with the words *Gaf hann Helga nafn*, 'he gave the name (of) Helgi,' and tells of the lands and the magnificent sword which the son receives. We cannot help asking: Why should the 'leek' be named apart, *before* all these gifts? No satisfactory explanation seems possible, and we may therefore conclude that *laukr*, 'leek,' was not the word the poet used.

The MS. has *itr lavc* (with *a* and *v* run together and a stroke above). In other old Icelandic MSS. this mark is used<sup>1</sup> (though we more frequently find a combination of *a* and *o* with a long stroke above) to indicate the *u*-umlaut of *á*, which is also written *ǣ*. Further, the *u*-umlaut of short *a*, is indicated in older MSS. by p. 25. a combined *ao*, in later MSS. by a combined *av*. I am, therefore, of the opinion that *lavc* was originally intended for *lǣc*,<sup>2</sup> acc. pl. neut. of *lák* = A.S. *lác*, neut. (pl. *lác*, preserved in Mid. Eng. *lac*, *loc*)—a word which means 'gift.'

The father came to bring his son *itr lǣk*, 'magnificent gifts.' Thereupon we read in the following strophe: 'He gave the name (of) Helgi, [the places] Hringstathir, Sólfrjǫll, Snæfrjǫll, . . . a richly ornamented sword to the brother of Sinfjǫtli (*i.e.* to Helgi).'

The word *lǣk* is used to sum up the gifts which are named directly after. This word *lák*, 'gift,' is not, and could never have been, a genuine Old Norse word. It is, on the contrary, clearly English. The A.S. *lác*, neuter, has its O.N. phonetic equivalent in the word

<sup>1</sup> See Gislason, *Um Frumparta Íslenzkrar Tíngu í Fornöldu*, Copenhagen, 1846.

<sup>2</sup> We have another example of the same thing in the same poem, H. H., 1, 54, where *halþva* is for *hávlo*, *i.e.* *hálu*, if, indeed, the right form here be not *hulþar*.



*leikr*, 'game'; but there is no trace in Norway or Iceland of *lák* with the meaning of 'gift.' Therefore, if my explanation is correct, it must have been in Britain that the word was carried over into Norse.

Just as *lók* is used in the Helgi-lay of gifts presented by a father to his son, so the A.S. *lác* is used in the same way in the A.S. poem *Elene*, 1200 f: *hire selfre suna sende tō lāce . . . gife unscynde*, 'to her own son she sent as a present the irreproachable gift.' And, further, just as the word is used in the Helgi-poem of a father's gifts, so we find in an A.S. hymn, *fæderes lāce* = *Patris munere*.<sup>1</sup>

I believe, then, that the word *lók*, 'gifts,' was carried over from English into the Helgi-lay in Britain, most likely from an English poem. Hence we may infer that the Norse poet who used the word had travelled among Englishmen in Britain, and that he had lived in districts where both English and Norse were spoken, and where both English and Norse poems were heard.

It may seem hazardous to make such wide-reaching conclusions on the evidence of a single word. I shall try, however, to prove that this is not an isolated example, but that there are many words, not only in  
p. 26. other Eddic poems, but also in the First Helgi-lay, which have a similar origin.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hymns, ed. for the Surtees Soc., 95, 27.

<sup>2</sup> From the way in which the words that the scribe failed to understand, viz. the acc. pl. of *lák*, 'gifts' (I, 7) and *hálu* (I, 54) are written, I infer that the *u*-umlaut of *á* was indicated in the original ms., and that this is a proof of its age. This shows, moreover, that the forms of easily intelligible words in the original ms. of the poem may often have been very different from those in the extant ms., and that they may have been a good deal more antique.

Another sure example of an English expression preserved in this First Helgi-lay, though in the guise of a Norse word, occurs in strophe 47, where a description is given of the men riding away in hot haste to announce to King Høthbrodd the coming of his enemies:—

*þeir af ríki  
renna létu  
Svipuð ok Sveggjuð  
Sólheima til  
dala daggóttu,  
dǫkkvar hlífir;  
skalf 'mistar marr'  
hvar megir fóru.*

'They rode (let run) their steeds, Sviputh and Sveggjuth, with all speed to Sólheimar, through dewy dales and dusky glens . . .'

The expression in the last line but one has not yet been satisfactorily explained. The word *skalf*, 'trembled,' shows that the meaning intended was: 'The earth trembled where the men advanced.'<sup>1</sup> The statement that the earth is made to tremble by the riding of men occurs regularly in Germanic epic poetry.<sup>2</sup> We find it not only in Scandinavian ballads of the Middle Ages, p. 27.

<sup>1</sup> This has already been recognised by F. Jónsson. He changes *marr* to *marr*, 'the earth.' I cannot, however, agree with him when, with Egilsson, he combines *Mistar megir*, 'sons of battle,' (from *Mist*, the name of a valkyrie, used by the skalds to designate 'battle'). This suggestion seems to me inadmissible, both because of the order of the words and the artificiality of the kenning.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the remark in the Irish tale, 'The Destruction of Troy,' in the *Book of Leinster* (l. 595, ed. Stokes): 'The earth trembled in that place where they came together.'



16 HOME OF THE EDDIC POEMS

but also in the Eddic poems: when Skírnir rode to the dwelling of Gerth, the earth, we read, trembled (*gerð bifask*, Skm. 14). But I would call particular attention to the following similar lines:—

*skalf 'mistar marr'  
hvar megir fóru,*

and *Atlakviða*, 13:—

*hristisk öll Húnmörk  
þar er harðmóðgir fóru.*

'The whole of Hunmark (or Hunwood) shook where the bold ones advanced,' referring to the ride of the Niflungs to Atli's land. Both poems have here *fóru*. *þar er* corresponds to *hvar* (originally *hvars*); *harðmóðgir* to *megir*; *hristisk* to *skalf*; so '*mistar marr*' must likewise correspond to *Hunmörk*, and be, like it, an indication of the particular land over which the men rode.<sup>1</sup>

I believe, therefore, that *mistar marr* is a corruption of A.S. *mistig mōr*, 'misty moor.' In *Béow.*, 162, we read of Grendel: *héold mistige mōras*, 'he held (inhabited) the misty moors.' The phrase, *ofer mōr mistig*, occurs elsewhere as a translation of *super montem caliginosum*.<sup>2</sup> With A.S. *mistig*, which comes from the

<sup>1</sup> From the agreement pointed out here it is not necessary to presuppose that the First Helgi-lay was influenced by the *Atlakviða*. But in favour of that view we have the fact that the riders in II. H., 1, 48, are called *Hniflungar*, just as the men whose ride is described in the Akv. strophe, are really Niflungs.

<sup>2</sup> *Rituale eccles. Dunelm.*, ed. Stevenson, 18, 38.

masc. noun *mist*, may be compared the mod. Icel. neuter *mistur*, 'fogginess in the air'; the mod. Norw. dialectal neuters *mistr* and *mist*, 'heat-mist,' 'drizzle, Scotch mist'; in Eidskogen (in Norway), *mist*, fem., 'cloud of dust'; mod. Swedish *mist* (said to be both masc. and fem.), 'fog'; so also in many West-Germanic dialects. A.S. *mōr* means both *moor* and *mountain*, the latter meaning being developed from 'marshy mountains,' 'stretches of fen-land.'

The expressions used in the Helgi-lay:—'dewy p. 28. dales, dusky glens,' and 'misty moors,' are entirely applicable to the landscape in many places in Northern England, Scotland, and Ireland.

Even if, as seems to me evident, the A.S. *mistig mōr* is the original of *mistar marr*, the former having been learnt by the Norse poet from Englishmen, the historical relation between the two expressions can be explained in different ways. It is possible that a Norse poet in Britain took from some A.S. poem the words *mistig mōr* in the form *mistar mórr*, and that some Icelander afterwards worked this over into *mistar marr*. Perhaps the latter conceived the original simple and natural expression as an artificial kenning, 'the steed of the fog,' 'the bearer of the fog,' *i.e.* the earth, on which the fog rested.

We have, as a result of what precedes, good grounds for believing that the First Helgi-lay was composed by a Norseman who had lived among Englishmen and was influenced by A.S. poetry. Looking at the poem from this point of view, we are able to throw light on several obscure places; and the conclusions above stated are thereby strengthened.

Of Helgi's youth we read in st. 9:—

*þá nam at vaxa  
fyr vina brjósti<sup>1</sup>  
álmr ítrborinn  
ynðis ljóma.*

p. 29. 'Then grew up before his friends' eyes (lit., breast) the high-born elm (*i.e.* hero) with the radiance of joy (*i.e.* joyous and fair).' That a hero, especially a young man, may be designated in the older Norse poetry as a tree, without the addition of a genitive, I have elsewhere<sup>2</sup> shown. Here the young prince is called *elm*. This mode of expression by which a hero or chieftain may be designated as a tree is very common in Irish poetry. In a verse on the Battle of Ross na Ríg,<sup>3</sup> Cuchulinn is called an oak (*rdil*). In the poem of Gilla Comgaill ua Slebin of the year 1002, the King Aed ua Neill is apostrophised as *a craeb oebind*, 'O, delightful tree!'<sup>4</sup> The brothers Mathgamain and Brian are called *da dos didin*, 'two spreading trees of shelter.'<sup>5</sup> The son of Murchad Brian is called *eo Rossa*, 'The yew of Ross.'<sup>6</sup> It is possible, then (though not necessary), to regard the use of the word 'tree' as a designation for Helgi, as showing the influence of Irish poetry.

The elm<sup>7</sup> is one of the most conspicuous trees in

<sup>1</sup> With *fyr vina brjósti*, which occurs earlier in Fáfñ., 7, cf. the Irish *a hucht slóig*, 'in the presence of an army.' See Windisch (*Wörterbuch*), s.v. *ncht*, breast.

<sup>2</sup> *Aarbøger f. nord. Old.*, 1889, 29-33.

<sup>3</sup> Hogan's edition, 92.

<sup>4</sup> *Cogadh Gaidhel*, 120.

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*, 56.

<sup>6</sup> *Id.*, 166.

<sup>7</sup> *Ulmus montana*, 'the Mountain Wych or Scotch Elm.' See Selby, *British Forest Trees*, 124 ff.

Scotland, as well as in the northern part of England and Ireland. It grows luxuriantly there in just such places as are described in our poem (st. 47) with the words: 'dewy dales, dusky glens,' and 'misty moors,' or 'foggy, marshy mountains.' The elm is less prominent in Norway, although indeed it is common in the south.

The fact that the word 'elm' is used to describe the young Helgi, together with many other considerations to which I shall call attention in this investigation, compels us to reject the opinion of Finnur Jónsson that the First Helgi-lay was composed in Greenland.<sup>1</sup> This expression proves also that the poem could not have been written in Iceland, as Björn Ólsen thinks. For just as the tree itself is foreign to that island, so the pictorial expression by which a young chieftain is called an elm, is foreign to the old poetry of its people. Nowhere in Icelandic poetry is a man described by the name of a *definite sort* of tree,<sup>2</sup> without the addition of a genitive, or of an antecedent word in a compound.

It was in a land where the poet's eye saw the elm strong and mighty, with magnificent trunk and wide-extending, luxuriant foliage, a land of dewy dales and dusky glens, that this lay was composed. Hence it is that the poet has taken the elm as a symbol of the

<sup>1</sup> Björn Ólsen (*Tímarit*, xv, 1894, 108-122) has, it seems to me, proved that Finnur Jónsson's arguments on this point are quite insufficient.

<sup>2</sup> *þollr* (root-vowel *o*) is not the name of a definite sort of tree, and must not be confused with *þoll*, gen. *þallar* (root-vowel *a*), 'fir,' pine.

vigorous youthful chieftain, the shelter of his faithful men.<sup>1</sup>

Possibly the poet was also influenced by the fact that he was familiar with H. H., II, 38: 'Helgi surpassed other warriors, even as a noble (*itrskapaðr*) ash is higher than thorn-bushes.'

Of the young Helgi we read in the same strophe (I, 9):—

*sparði eigi hilmir*  
*hodd 'blöðrekinn'.*

'The king spared not the hoard. . . .' The word *blöðrekinn*, if really Old Norse, can mean only 'washed in blood,' like *dreyrrekinn*<sup>2</sup>; but that meaning is not suitable here.<sup>3</sup>

p. 31. I would suggest that *blöðrekinn* is to be regarded as

<sup>1</sup> Finnur Jónsson is wrong in changing *álmr itrborinn* to *alms þrr borenn*, 'Eigtl. = diener des bogens, ein kriegler. *borenn yn þis ljóma* = begabt mit der wonne glanz, mit herrlicher wonne; cp. *vile borenn*; *itrborenn* mit dat. konnte nicht gesagt werden.' The form *itrborinn*, however, is supported by the fact that we have the same word in H. Hj., 37; and *itr-* as the first part of the compound, by the fact that *itr-skapaðr* is used as an epithet for *askr* in H. H., II, 38, where Helgi is compared to an ash. Moreover, *ynðis ljóma* is not, in my opinion, to be construed with *itrborinn*, but is to be regarded as an accompanying detail to be taken along with *nam at vaxa*. In the Eddic poems *ðrr* is always used in its original meaning of 'messenger' and never as part of a compound artificial kenning for a man, as Finnur Jónsson would use it here.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *reka blöð um granar einhvers*.

<sup>3</sup> The way in which the word is written would lead us to construe '*blöþrekin*' with *hilmir*; but Helgi, who has not yet been in battle, cannot be called 'blood-washed.' Vigfusson and F. Jónsson write *hodd blöðrekin*; but 'blood-washed hoard' is also an expression which has no analogue.

an epithet of *hilmir*, 'king,' and that the adjective is a corruption of the expression *blædrecen* in some A.S. poem. The first part of the word is the A.S. *blæd*, masc., 'abundance, prosperity,' which is used of youth in A.S. poetry exactly as here. Cf. *on þām ærestan blæde* (*Gíflác*, 468), 'in the first (youth's) prosperity'; *geoguðhádes blæd* (*Júl.*, 168), 'the prosperity of youth.' The second part appears to me to be A.S. *recen*, 'ready, quick.' The compound *blædrecen* describes, therefore, the king's son as one who quickly (after a short time had passed) stood fully developed in all the prosperity of youth.<sup>1</sup> Heroes in epic poetry are usually described as having had a much more rapid growth and development than other persons.

After the battle in which the sons of Hunding are slain, Sigrún and her battle-maidens come riding through the air to Helgi. In H. H., I, 15, we read that the king saw the maidens come riding *und hjálmum á himinvanga*, 'helmet-decked on the plains of heaven.'

Evidently the poet to whom we owe the lay in its present form, understood *Himinvanga* as the name of a place on the earth to which the battle-maidens came riding; for we read in st. 8 that, immediately after Helgi's birth, his father gave him *Himinvanga*, together with other places. But it is evident also that this name was not originally that of a definite locality, for *hebanwang*, 'plain of heaven,' is used in the O.S. poem *Héliand*

<sup>1</sup> There is another A.S. expression which one might regard as the basis of the word, viz. *blædrecen*, from *blæd*, fem. = Germ. *Blüte*, bloom, which is contained in *blædhvat* (*copiosus floribus vel fructibus*), *Exeter Book Riddles*, 2. A.S. *blæd* is often confused with A.S. *blæd*.

as a poetic phrase for heaven, e.g. *scal hēlag gēst fan hebanwange cuman* (l. 275), 'the Holy Ghost shall come from heaven (the plain of heaven).'

- p. 32. Clearly, therefore, in the strophe of the Helgi-lay in which the poet describes the ride of the battle-maidens through the air, he has imitated an older poem which used the poetic phrase 'the plain of heaven' to signify 'heaven.'<sup>1</sup> The imitator, who mistook this phrase for the name of a place on the earth, decided to insert it in the list of places which the father gave his new-born son. He could scarcely have misunderstood the word in this way if it had been commonly used for 'heaven' in the older Scandinavian poetry. In the *Heliand*, however, *hebanwang* is but one of many *-wang* compounds with similar meaning, e.g. *godes wang*, 'God's plain,' i.e. Paradise; *grōni wang*, 'the green plain,' i.e. the earth. In A.S. poetry *wang* is used in the same way, e.g. *neorxnawang*, 'Paradise.' The plain of Paradise where the Phoenix dwelt, is repeatedly called *wang*. In view of this frequent use of the word *wang* in A.S. and of the general similarity between the phraseology of O.S. and A.S. poetry, I conclude that *heofonwang*, 'plain of heaven,' was used as a poetical circumlocution for heaven in A.S. poetry also, and that the word was carried over, directly or indirectly, from some A.S. poem into the Helgi-lay.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. H. H., I, 54: 'There came down *from heaven* the helmet-decked wights (battle-maidens).'

<sup>2</sup> With reference to the pl. form *Himinwanga* as opposed to the sing. *hebanwang* in O.S., we may compare the similar change of the name of Freyja's hall *Fólkvangr* in one MS. of Snorri's *Edda* (see A. M. edition, I, 96) to *Fólkvangar*.

In what precedes I have tried to show that certain of the phrases peculiar to the First Helgi-lay arose in Britain under English influence. I shall now examine a number of phrases in the same poem, which also occur (or have parallels) in other Old Norse poems, p. 33. even outside of the Edda; and I hope to prove that some of these are due to A.S. influence, or at least show a remarkable agreement with A.S. poetic expressions. I shall also point out the probability of Irish influence on at least one phrase in the O.N. poem.

As I shall show later (see App. II.) *hjálmvitr*, 'helmet-wights,' and *sárvitr fluga*, 'the flying wound-wight,' H. H., I, 54, are imitations of *alvitr* in the Lay of Wayland—a word which was understood as 'all-wights, wights through and through,' although it really corresponds to the A.S. *ælbite* or *elfete*, 'swans.'

*Ræsir*,<sup>1</sup> 'king,' occurs in H. H., I, 17, in H. Hj., 18, in the *Reginsmál*, 14, in the story of Halfdan the Old, and in the *Hákonarmál*, in a narrower sense also in the artificial poetry of the skalds.<sup>2</sup> It is the same word as the A.S. *ræswa*. Neither the O.N. nor the A.S. word is found in prose. The A.S. word means 'counsellor' (e.g. *cyninges ræswa*, Daniel, 417) or 'ruler' (e.g. *folces weorodes*, etc., *ræswa*, 'ruler of the people, army'). A

<sup>1</sup> My remarks on *ræsir* were written down before I saw the discussion of the word by Gislason, *Efterladte Skrifter*, I, 241. He suggests a loan from A.S., but does not come to any definite decision.

<sup>2</sup> In the *Glymdrápa* (*Haraldssaga hárfagra*, 11), and in the poems of Arnór Jarlaskáld, Markús Skeggjason, Thorkell Gislason, Hallfreth, Thjóthólf Arnórsson, and others. Snorri also uses it.



king is sometimes called *ræswa*, without any dependent genitive. The word comes from the substantive *ræs* (dat. pl., *ræswum*<sup>1</sup>), which means 'advice,' 'the giving of advice,' and which in its turn is based on A.S. *rædan*, 'to advise, to rule' = O.N. *ræða*. Cf. the A.S. *ræsbora*, 'counsellor, ruler, king'; *meotudes ræswum* (*Azarias*, 126), 'by God's guidance'; *ræswan*, 'to think, suppose, guess.' Since there is no trace in O.N. of any substantive based on *ræða* from which *ræsir* could have been formed, and since there is no trace in O.N. of *ræsir* in the more original meaning of 'counsellor,' we must  
 p. 34. conclude that the word was borrowed from A.S. *ræswa*, and came into Norse through Norse poems composed in Britain.<sup>2</sup>

In H. H., I, 51, Høthbrodd, on hearing that enemies have landed, says: *Renni 'ræcn' bitluð* (with a *v* run together), 'let the bitted animals run.' Here, *raukn bitluð*, neut. pl., signifies 'horses.' In the Shield-poem of Bragi the Old, the same words are used (in my opinion by imitation of the Helgi-lay<sup>3</sup>) in the strophe

<sup>1</sup> See Cosijn in Sievers, *Beiträge*, XIX, 447.

<sup>2</sup> As regards its ending, O.N. *ræsir* bears the same relation to A.S. *ræswa* that O.N. *visir*, 'prince,' bears to the synonymous *vlsi*, A.S. *wlfa*.

Old Norse poets brought *ræsir* into connection with the genuine Norse word *ræsa*, 'to set in motion,' as is evident from Snorri's *Háttatal*, 17, 7, and the commentary on that passage.

This late conception brought about the use of *ræsir* in the sense of 'he who sets in motion,' with a governed genitive, in kennings for 'a man,' e.g. Glúm Geirason's *ræsir rógeisu*, 'he who sets the battle-flame (i.e. sword) in motion.' I shall not discuss here the words *jǫfurr* and *vlsi*, 'king,' although they might support my opinions as to *ræsir*. Falk also (see *Arkiv för Nordisk Filologi*, v, 258) regards *ræsir* as a loan from A.S. *ræswa*.

<sup>3</sup> See my *Bidrag til den ældste Skaldedigtningens Historie*, p. 48.

on Gefjon, who ploughs Zealand from Sweden with four oxen: *svdt af rennirauknum | rauk*, 'so that it smoked from the running animals.' Here the word is used of oxen. In kennings for ship ('steeds of the sea') *raukn*, neut. pl., is used by many Icelandic skalds.<sup>1</sup> In prose the word occurs neither in old nor in modern times. Its real meaning appears to be 'animals (horses or oxen) which are used for rapid advance.'

The word *raukn* is connected with *rekinn*,<sup>2</sup> which, p. 35. like its derivative *rekningr*,<sup>3</sup> is used as a poetic term for 'ox.'<sup>4</sup>

I have suggested that *rekinn* and *raukn* are loan-words from A.S. *recen*, 'ready, quick.'<sup>5</sup> The corresponding adverb is written also *recone*, *recune*, *ricene*. Thus *rekinn*, *raukn*, appear to have been used by the poets instead of the O.N. prose word *skjótr*, 'post-horse,' based on the adj. *skjótr*, 'quick' (cf. Old Swedish *skiut*, masc., a mare).

The word *mengi*, neut., 'a multitude,' used often (see H. H., I, 26, 50; Brot., 9.; Sig., 56, 66; Akv., 4; also in *Eiríksmál*, in a verse in the *Hervararsaga*, in *Har. s. hárf.*, 31 (Torfeinar), and in *Merlínusspá*), but only of

<sup>1</sup> By Thorleik Fagri, by Thorkel Gíslason in *Bíadrápa*, by Gunnlaug Leifsson in *Merlínusspá*, by Snorri in *Hítatal*, and by Sturla.

<sup>2</sup> Sn. Edda, I, 484. Instead of this, we find *reginn* in Sn. E., I, 587; II, 483, 566; and in Upps. E., I, 484.

<sup>3</sup> Sn. E., I, 587; II, 483, 866. Egilsson connects the word with *reka*.

<sup>4</sup> So also Wimmer, *Oldn. Lesebog*, II, xvi f, note 2.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. my *Bútrög til den ældste Skaldedigtningens Historie*, p. 30. On *blöðrekinn*, H. H., I, 9, cf. above, p. 21. The diphthong *au* probably arose instead of *e* through the influence of genuine Norse words in which similar changes have taken place.

persons, never occurs in prose. It differs by its *n* from *margr*, 'many a' with *r*, and was probably borrowed from A.S. *mengeo*,<sup>1</sup> fem., 'a multitude.'

In H. H., I, 54, the slain lying on the battle-field are called *Hugins barr*, 'the grain of Hugin (Odin's raven).' As I have noted in App. II., this phrase was imitated by later Icelandic skalds. It is, however, self-evident that it must have originated in a land with extensive grain-fields, and it is therefore improbable that the Helgi-lay, in which the phrase first appears, was composed in Greenland or in Iceland. On the other hand, the designation of corpses on the battle-field as 'Odin's raven's grain' appears to be an imitation of an Irish poetic expression. In *The Yellow Book of Lecan*, an Irish MS. of the first half of the fifteenth century, and in other Irish MSS., we find the following explanation:  
 p. 36. 'The crop of Macha (a war-goddess, battle-fury), i.e. the heads of men who were killed in battle.'<sup>2</sup> The expression 'Macha's crop' is certainly many centuries older than the MSS. in which it is preserved. In the Irish Chronicle *Cogadh Gaidhel* (ed. Todd, p. 191), the slaughter in the Battle of Clontarf is said to have appeared to the spectators on Dublin wall like the mowing of a field of oats. Sitric, son of Amlaib

<sup>1</sup> Cf. e.g. *mænigo þus micle*, *Crist*, 156, and *mid mengu mðran*, *Gððl.*, 208, with *mengi til mikit*, *Eiríksmál*, *mikit er þeira mengi*, *Herv. s.*, p. 285, and *miklu mest mengi þeira*, H. H., I, 50. Note that the poem *Eiríksmál* was influenced by English poetry. The word *mengi* may, indeed, be used to characterise the time of heroic poetry, but F. Jónsson is scarcely justified in using it to decide the time of certain heroic poems as opposed to that of others.

<sup>2</sup> *Mesrad machæ*, i. *cendæ doine iar na nairleach* (Hennessy in *Rev. Celt.*, I, 36). *Mesrad* is also used of the feeding of swine on acorns.

(Sigtrygg Silkbeard, son of Ólaf Kvaran), stood in the watch-tower with his wife, Brian's daughter, and he said to her: 'The strangers reap the field well; many is the sheaf they let go from them.'<sup>1</sup> The poetic phrase 'Macha's crop' is the more natural, because, according to *Cogadh Gaidhel*, Badb, who, like Macha, was a war-fury, hovered over the heads of the warriors in the Battle of Clontarf.

As to the personal surroundings in which the author of the First Helgi-lay lived, we may, I think, draw some inferences from his poetic phraseology. He has no less than twenty-one different names for king. Many of these, moreover, occur in older Eddic poems which, as we can prove on other grounds, the author knew. Evidently, therefore, the poet must have lived at a king's court,<sup>2</sup> and must have had the poems of other court skalds as models.<sup>3</sup> And since, as we have seen, p. 37. the author of the First Helgi-lay gives evidence of having associated with Irishmen and Englishmen, the courts at which he lived must have been those of Irish or English kings.

<sup>1</sup> *Is imda serrtlaigi leccait uathib.* Similar expressions occur in the popular poetry of other peoples. See e.g. *Danmarks gamle Folkeviser*, No. 136 A, v. 7: 'They struck down the men of Vestergyllen as peasants harvest grain.'

<sup>2</sup> Another reason for believing that the First Helgi-lay cannot have been composed in Greenland.

<sup>3</sup> The same thing may be said of the authors of the so-called Second Helgi-lay, for there we find fourteen names for king, two of which do not occur in the First Lay.

## V

THE FIRST HELGI-LAY AND THE IRISH  
THE BATTLE OF ROSS NA RÍG

IN order to determine the circumstances under which the First Helgi-lay was composed, and the to which the author was subjected, it is to be noted that some parts of this poem, as I shall prove in what follows, are closely connected with traditional tales. The story of which I shall now form an episode in the description of the battle of Ross na Ríg, to be found in the *Book of Ross na Ríg*, an Irish MS. written a little before 1160, is the story of the battle of Ross na Ríg, on the shore of the river Boyne in the east of Ireland. The battle is supposed to have taken place at the beginning of the Christian era.

'The Battle of Ross na Ríg' forms a continuation of the great epic-cycle of the north of Ireland, the *bó Chalgne* (i.e. 'the cattle-spoil of Cúalgne').

<sup>1</sup> The part which chiefly concerns us here was first edited by Zimmer in *Ztsch. f. d. Alt.*, xxxii, 220 ff. A large number of the names were first explained by Kuno Meyer and W. Meyer. The whole story has been edited, with translation and notes, by Edmund Hogan (Dublin, 1892).

the Ulster warrior Cuchulinn is the chief hero. The episode which here concerns us, is connected with p. 38. that part of the story which tells how the Druid Cathbad comes to the Ulster King Conchobar when the latter is overcome with grief because his land has been harried by the armies of Ailill and Medb from Connaught.

Notwithstanding the fact that the names of persons and places in the Irish tale are entirely different from those in the First Helgi-lay, there still seem to be points of contact between the events described in the two accounts.

In the first place, such resemblances are to be seen in several situations, on which, however, I should not lay particular stress if the points of agreement were confined to them. The account given by the Norse poet is as follows: When Helgi is making ready to attack Høthbrodd in the latter's own land, he sends messengers over the sea to summon troops to his aid, promising them money in return for their services; and a large and splendid fleet assembles. When this fleet sails out of the fjord into the sea, it encounters a terrible storm, but it nevertheless comes safely to its destination. One of Høthbrodd's brothers, who has been watching Helgi's fleet from the shore, inquires who the strangers are. He soon learns the truth, and men then ride to Høthbrodd to acquaint him with the situation. They tell of Helgi's arrival with magnificent ships and thousands of men. The poem concludes with an account of the ensuing battle, in which Helgi slays Høthbrodd.

In the Irish tale, the Druid Cathbad advises King

Conchobar, before invading his enemies' land, to despatch messengers, with information as to his plans, to the Irish hero, Conall Cernach, and to his friends among the Scandinavians in the North-Scottish isles and elsewhere in the north. Accordingly, Conchobar sends messengers out over the sea. They find Conall in the island of Lewis, where he is collecting the taxes. Conall receives Conchobar's men gladly. 'And there were sent then intelligencers and messengers from him to his absent friends through the foreign northern lands. It is then that there was made a gathering and muster by them too; and their stores were prepared by them also; and their ships and their galleys were secured in order; and they came to the place where Conall was. . . . Now set out the great naval armament under Conall Cernach and Findchad and Aed and the nobles of Norway. And they came forward out on the current of the Mull of Cantire.<sup>1</sup> And a green surge of the tremendous sea rose for them. . . . Such was the strength of the storm that rose for them, that the fleet was parted in three.'

We next learn how each of these three parts came to land. 'It was not long for Conchobar, when he was there, till he saw the pointed sail-spreaders (?) and the full-crewed ships and the bright-scarlet pavilions and the beautiful many-coloured standards and banners and the blue ships (?), which were as of glass, and the weapons of war.' Conchobar says to his men, who are standing about him, that he fears these are enemies who are coming with the great fleet which fills the

<sup>1</sup> The extreme point of the headland Cantire in the west of Scotland.

mouth of the fjord. 'It is then that Sencha mac Ailella went forward to the place where the great naval armament was, and he asked them, "Who goes here?" It is this they said then, that they were the foreign friends of Conchobar who were there.' The king has the horses harnessed to the chariots, and receives his friends as is best fitting. In the ensuing battle Conchobar gains the victory over King Cairpre and his men of Leinster.

The chief difference in situation between the Norse poem and the Irish tale consists in the fact (which I shall discuss later) that in the former the fleet comes united to the land of the enemy, whereas in the latter it comes to a friendly land and is in three separate divisions, having been scattered by the storm. But the agreement between these two accounts becomes more apparent when one contrasts the *Helgi-lay* with the poems on the *Gjúkungs*, in which we read of the doings of individuals, not of armies, and that, as a rule, on land, not at sea. Even in the poems on the youth of Sigurth the slayer of Fáfñir, in which sea-life is more emphasised, we find no great and magnificent fleets like those in the *Helgi-lay* and in the Irish 'Battle of Ross na Ríg.' As Vigfusson remarked, the descriptions in the *Helgi-lay* make us think of a land visited p. 40. by the great Norman fleets. There the poets were familiar from literature also, especially from that written in Latin, with the appearance of the powerful hosts and mighty fleets which were wont to be assembled in case of war. Evidently these descriptions cannot have been written in Greenland, which Finnur Jónsson regards as the home of the First



Helgi-lay. Nor could an Icelander have found models for them in his native land.

A number of expressions in the Irish prose text correspond to expressions in the Norse poem, and the agreements in some respects are so particular that historical connection between the two accounts is proved, not necessarily by the different details taken separately, but by the whole series of points of contact. The similarity in situation, just pointed out, shows that the connection cannot be explained by supposing that the Irish tale imitated the Helgi-lay. We must believe, on the contrary, that the Helgi-lay was influenced by an Irish story. For in no other Eddic lay does the hero or another king despatch messengers to muster auxiliary troops, promising these troops payment for their services; while in several Irish stories, as in that before us, we read that 'intelligencers and messengers were sent out' to friends. Besides, the Irish account agrees, in this particular, with the facts of history.

Let us now compare the corresponding Norse and Irish expressions. I would have it understood, however, that in those places in which I infer connection between the two accounts and point out how the phraseology of the Norse poem was affected by that of the Irish tale, I do not assert that all the Norse phrases in question were affected by this Irish story alone, and were not also influenced, in some degree, by other accounts. The discussion of this question in the next chapter will make clearer my ideas on this point.

With the Irish expression: 'There were sent then intelligencers and messengers from him' (*faitte dano fessa ocus techta uad*), we may compare that in the Norse poem: 'The king sent messengers thence' (*Sendi áru allvaldr þaðan*, H. H., I, 21). Cf. the Irish: 'They came to the place in which Conall was,' with the Norse: 'There the king waited until they came thither, etc.' (*þaðan beið þengill unns þiníg kómu*, H. H., I, 22); the Irish: 'Now set out the great naval armament . . . under the nobles of Lochland' (*Raergitar trá intromchoblach mór muride . . . na mathib Lochlainne*), with the Norse: 'Under the nobles (with the nobles on board) the king's fleet drew away from land' (*gékki und øðlingum lofðungs floti lundum fjarri*, H. H., I, 27).

In both poems the fleet encounters a terrible storm. In the Irish we read: 'And a green surge of the tremendous sea rose for them, and the seals and walruses<sup>1</sup> and craneheads(?) and white heads(?) and the many billows of the tremendous sea rose for them too.' In like manner the Norse poet represents the billows as rising up against the fleet: 'When the billow (the sister of Kólga, the cold maiden) and the long keels dashed together, it sounded as if the breakers and the cliffs were crashing against one another. . . . The seamen did not hold back from the meeting with the billows, when Ægir's daughter (*i.e.* the billow) wished to trip up the steeds guided by the stays (*i.e.* the ships)' (H. H., I, 28, 29).

We see that even in the Irish story the terrors

<sup>1</sup> The word used is *rossdíl*, pl. of *rossdíl*, which is borrowed from O.N. *hrossvalr*.

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of the sea are personified as mythical beings. The Norse poet, however, goes further, and brings in the daughters of Ægir, in whose creation the story of the daughters of Nereus and Oceanus probably had some share.

H. H., I, 30 reads: 'The king's billow-deer (ship) twisted itself by main strength out of *Rán's* hand (*snøfrisk ramliga Rán ör hendi gjálfráðyr konungs*).' The name of the sea-giantess, Ægir's wife, *Rán*, is probably a genuine Norse word, having its origin in \**Rāðn*, and coming from *rāða*, to rule.<sup>1</sup> It was probably because of the resemblance between *Rán* and the Irish *róin* that the Norse poet made *Rán* stretch out her hand in the storm against the ship; for in the Irish story which influenced his poem, we are told that *róin*<sup>2</sup> (seals) rise up in the storm against the ships.

The descriptions of the ships in the two accounts also show agreements, which can scarcely be accidental, though, it should be said, the Norse expressions which I

<sup>1</sup> See Axel Kock in *Ztsch. f. d. Alt.*, XL, 205; cf. Swed. *sjörå*, neuter, a mermaid.

<sup>2</sup> Irish *róin*, *ruon*, 'seal,' corresponds to Cymric *moel-ron*, Lith. *riūnis*, Lettish *rōnis* (Stokes-Bezenberger, *Urkeit. Sprachschatz*, p. 235). Zimmer's treatment of the word in *Ztsch. f. d. Alt.*, xxxii, 270 f, is incorrect in several respects. Irish *róin* has nothing to do with O.N. *hreinn*, which can never mean 'seal' or 'whale.' The word *hreinnbraut* means 'the way of the reindeer,' i.e. the land. In *Flateyjarbók*, II, 508, we are told how the Orkney Earls Rögnvald and Harald were accustomed nearly every summer to go over to Caithness and up into the woods (*merkr*) there, in order to hunt *raudýri* (red deer) or *hreina* (reindeer). This of course does not refer, as Zimmer says it does, to the taking of seals or whales. Nor need we think that the reindeer is named here instead of a different species of red deer; for Prof. Rygh has called my attention to

shall bring forward do not all occur in a single place in the poem. The ships are called in Irish, *na-longa luchtlethna*, 'the crew-broad,' i.e. 'the ships fully equipped with men'; in Norse, in the description of the assembling of the fleet, *langhofðuð skip und líðundum* (H. H., I, 24), 'the long-beaked ships with seamen on board.' The Norse poet seems here to have preserved the alliteration on *l*, and sought for a suitable Norse word, which should resemble the sound of the Irish *longa* as nearly as possible. Particulars of the ship's equipment are named in both accounts. That which is first given in the Irish story appears to mean 'pointed forks with which the sails were spread.'<sup>1</sup> The Norse poet mentions *rakkar* (in Shetland called *rakies*, rings, by means of which the sail is fastened to the mast and sail-yards).<sup>2</sup>

After describing the ships, the Irish story speaks of the fact that the accuracy of the story in the *Flateyjarbók* is supported by the discovery of the remains of reindeer in the shires of Caithness and Sutherland in the so-called castles of the Picts. See Anderson, *Scotland in Pagan Times: The Iron Age*, Edinburgh, 1883, p. 221; and I. A. Smith, *Remains of the Reindeer in Scotland*, in the *Proceedings of the Soc. of Antiquaries of Scotland*, VIII, 186. The A.S. *hrðn*, 'reindeer,' is an entirely different word from *hran*, *hron*, 'whale' (not 'seal'). Metre shows that the latter had a short vowel. Irish *rón* cannot therefore have been borrowed from Scandinavian.

<sup>1</sup> *Na-corrgabla sítil*, really 'the sail's beak-forks.'

<sup>2</sup> In the Irish we read of 'the beautiful many-coloured banners and battle-confingi' (*na-merggida alle illdathacha ocus na-confingi catha*). In H. H., II, 19 we find: *gunnsfani gullinn fyr stafni*, 'the golden battle-banner before the prow.' I suggest that the Irish *confingi*, which has hitherto not been explained, is a loan-word, and connected with the Old French *gonfanon*, *confanon*, 'war-standard,' 'banner,' in Middle English *gonfenoun*. If this etymology be correct, we have here agreement between the Irish tale and the Second Helgi-lay also. Irish *mergge* is most likely a loan-word from O.N. *merke*, 'mark.'

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'the bright scarlet pavilions' (*na-pupla corcarglana*). The Norse poem mentions the ships' 'stem-pavilions' (*stafntjöld*) when telling how the fleet sails away (H. H., I, 26).

Directly after, the Irish tale speaks of 'the blue bright ships (?)',<sup>1</sup> a phrase which may be compared with the 'blue-black and gold-adorned ships' of the Norse poem (*brimdyr blásvört ok blúin gulli*, H. H., I, 50).

The Irish account seems to help us in clearing up an obscure place in the Norse text. In H. H., I, 21, we read of Helgi, who sent messengers out to get help :

*Sendi áru  
allvaldr þaðan  
of lopt ok um lög  
leiðar at biðja.*

'Thereupon the king sent messengers through the air and over the sea to solicit help.' The expression, 'through the air,' is very curious; for battle-maidens cannot be called *áru*, 'messengers,' and neither they nor valkyries, so far as we can tell from the Eddic poems, were sent by mortals to bear messages. It has therefore been thought that the passage should read : *of land* (or *láð*) *ok um lög*, 'over land and by water'; but this is not what stands in the MS., and, moreover, wherever in the poem troops are collected to aid in battle, only sea-troops, not land-troops, are mentioned.

<sup>1</sup> In Irish : *na-siblanga gorma glainidi*. Hogan translates *siblanga* in the text by 'lances (?)', but says in the note : ' = *sith-langa*, long boats(?).' *Glainidi* means strictly 'of glass.'

The Irish tale suggests another possibility. There the p. 45. messengers journey 'over the surface (?) of the sea and of the great ocean.' This expression occurs twice.<sup>1</sup> It seems to me possible to suppose that the Norse poet misunderstood the difficult Irish expression, which he took to mean 'up over the sea (*i.e.* without touching the water) and over the great deep,' and thus formed his curious 'through the air and over the sea.'

The Helgi-lay, after telling how Helgi's fleet was assembled, proceeds: 'Helgi inquired of Hjørleif, "Hast thou mustered the brave men?" But the young king said to the other (*i.e.* to Helgi) that it would take long from Crane-bank to count the ships' (H. H., I, 23, 24). Helgi thus sent out another king called Hjørleif to inspect the fleet and see how great it was. In reply to Helgi's inquiry on his return, Hjørleif declared that the fleet was so great that it would take long to count it.<sup>2</sup>

The situation in the Norse poem was doubtless influenced by the similar one in the Irish story.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is as follows: *dar muncind mara ocus mór-fairgi* (in the first place *mór-fairge*). *Muncind mara* is explained by *uachtar mara* (see Hogan, p. 12, note 7), *i.e.* 'the upper part of the sea.' Elsewhere *muncind* means 'straits'; see Stokes, *Togail Troi* (Calcutta, 1882), Gloss. Index.

<sup>2</sup> As to the name of the place from which he inspected the fleet, Crane-bank, we may note that the crane is very often named in Irish heroic tales.

<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, compare the place in the saga of Frotho III. in Saxo (ed. Müller, Bk. v, pp. 232 ff. and 237) which tells how Frotho gets information as to the strength of the enemy from Eric, who had acted as spy. (This *fornaldarsaga* here shows points of contact with the *Hervararsaga*, chap. 14, pp. 285-287, also.)

Conchobar sent out the young hero Iriel to reconnoitre the hostile host at Ross na Ríg. Iriel, who, amongst other qualities, was highly esteemed for his 'kingliness,' went up on a hill by the river Boyne, from which he  
 p. 46. could see far, and there surveyed the forces of the enemy. On his return he gave Conchobar a description of what he had seen. 'How, my life Iriel?' inquired the king. 'I give my word truly,' said Iriel; 'it seems to me that there is not a ford on river, not a stone on hill, nor highways, nor road . . . that is not full of their horse-teams and of their servants.'<sup>1</sup>

The hostile Irish king who fell in the Battle of Ross na Ríg by Cuchulinn's hand, was called *Carpre* or *Corpre*, later *Cairbre*. It looks as if the Norse poet perceived a similarity between this name and that of the king who falls in the battle with Helgi, viz. Høthbrodd,<sup>2</sup> which was known to him from the older Helgi-lay. This accidental resemblance of names was, as I suppose, one of the reasons why the Norse poet transferred to the Helgi-lay features from the description of the Battle of Ross na Ríg.

The Irish story seems to throw light on an expression which Sigrún uses of Høthbrodd in H. H., I, 18.

<sup>1</sup> See Hogan's ed., chaps. 27, 28 (pp. 36-39).

<sup>2</sup> In my *Studien*, p. 194 (Norw. ed., p. 187), I have shown that the Scandinavian from whom came the story of Gelderus in Saxo, connected the British name *Cador* with the Norse *Høðr*. The Irish *cnocán* recurs in the O.N. *knokan* (*Studien*, p. 571; Norw. ed., p. 539). With reference to the vowel, note that the Irish *Gormlaith* recurs in the O.N. *Kormlǫð*. O.N. *ð* and *r* shift when medial, when *r* is found elsewhere in the word, or before a consonant; cf. *baðmr* and *barmr* (*ættaðmr* and *ættharmr*); A.S. *beorwe* becomes O.N. *beðvi* in *Brat*, 13; *hrǫfrask* becomes *hrǫðask*; *\*hræri* becomes *hræði*; *\*yrvarr* becomes *yðvarr*.

Her words are: 'I have said that Høthbrodd the brave king is (obnoxious to me) as the son of a cat':

*en ek hefi, Helgi!  
Høðbrodd kvæðinn  
konung ÓNEISAN  
sem KATTAR SON.*

This expression, 'son of the cat,' the old Icel. author of the *Völsungasaga* found so strange and, indeed, unintelligible, that he changed it for another. That *Kattar son* is the surname of a particular man we may infer from an Icel. tale in which the same expression p. 47. occurs. To Harald Harthráði came the Icclander Stuf the Blind, son of Thóρθ Cat (*son þórðar Kattar*). 'Whose son art thou?' asked the king. 'I am Cat's son (*Kattar son*),' said he. 'What cat dost thou mean?' asked the king.<sup>1</sup> The race of this Thóρθ Cat had many relations with the Celts of the British Isles; and one of his sons was living at the beginning of the eleventh century,—at the time, therefore, when the First Helgi-lay was composed. It is probable, then, that 'Cat's son' in the lay is in like manner to be understood as a surname.

King Carpre who fell in the Battle of Ross na Ríg, was surnamed *nia fer*, i.e. 'hero of the men.' But there was another King Carpre, often mentioned in Irish saga, whose surname was *Cinnchait* or *Caitcheann*, i.e. 'Cathead.'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Morkinskinna*, ed. Unger, p. 104; Fms., vi. 390.

<sup>2</sup> Rhys, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 313, explains *Cinnchait* as 'Cathead's son.' The Irish story of the *immram* of Snedgus and Mac Riagla tells how on an island in the ocean north-west of Ireland were found men with



Now Høthbrodd in the Helgi-lay was, as I have shown, taken to correspond to Carpre *nia fer*. This surname, 'hero of men,' has about the same meaning as the epithet, *konung óneisan*,<sup>1</sup> 'the brave king,' which Sigrún gives Høthbrodd, in H. H., I, 18.

When the poet makes Sigrún say: 'I have said that Høthbrodd the brave king is (as obnoxious to me) as Cat's son,' it is possible that he used these expressions because he thought of Carpre *nia fer* as contrasted with Carpre *cinnchait*, 'cat-head.' The latter is a demoniacal figure in Irish saga. He was a usurper, and therefore the land did not prosper under his rule. His sons were born deformed, and because of this he had them drowned. The Scandinavians who heard stories of such a personage might easily get to think of him as a giant. Among the O.N. names for giants in Snorri's Edda occurs *køttr*,<sup>2</sup> 'cat.' Whoever inserted the name in this place, doubtless got it from H. H., I, 18, where he understood the word as the name of a giant.

Zimmer has shown that the Irish episode of the Scandinavian troops who came to the aid of Conchobar in Ireland, is a later interpolation from Viking times into an older story of Conchobar and the Battle of Ross na Ríg, which already had taken literary form.

cat-heads, who had killed the crew of an Irish vessel. In the Old French poem, *Bataille Loquifer*, which has many Celtic features, there appears a monster with cat-head, *Chapalu* (from Cymric *cath*, 'cat,' and *penlle*, 'head,' properly 'headstead,' *lle* from older \**lo*).

<sup>1</sup> O.N. *neiss* means 'ashamed.' The adjective *óneiss* is, therefore, used of one who does not hold back ashamed, but goes bravely to the front and distinguishes himself. *Óneiss* can hardly mean 'blameless.'

<sup>2</sup> See *Sn. Edda*, AM. ed., I, 550; II, 470; II, 615.

In that older account no Scandinavians were named. This is evident from the fact that they play no part in the continuation of the story, although the joyful and splendid reception which they received is particularly emphasised. On the contrary, it is the mighty, heroic deeds of Conall Cernach which are described in the Battle of Ross na Ríg.<sup>1</sup>

Zimmer has also made an ingenious conjecture as to the reason why the episode of the reinforcements from the islands north of Scotland and other northern lands was inserted in the Battle of Ross na Ríg, which in its oldest form cannot have shown any knowledge of the Vikings. In this oldest version, the fact that the famous Ulster hero, Conall Cernach, did not take part in the first battle between the Ulstermen under Conchobar and the men from Connaught under Ailill and Medb, was, Zimmer thinks, accounted for on the ground that he was not in Ireland at all, but in the districts of Scotland which had been taken and colonised by the people of Ulster, and in the Scottish Isles, whither he had gone<sup>2</sup> to collect taxes among Gaill p. 49. (the strangers). This oldest version, Zimmer thinks, went on to say that Conall, receiving information of the proposed expedition of Conchobar, actually mustered his men and took part in it. Since the inhabitants of islands north of Scotland were called *Gaill*, 'strangers,' in the story, and since in later times Scan-

<sup>1</sup> See Zimmer, *Ztsch. f. d. Alt.*, xxiii, 228 f; cf. 235-237.

<sup>2</sup> Just as in the Irish tale of the Wooing of Emer; see Zimmer, *Ztsch. f. d. Alt.*, xxxii, 237-241. In the earlier version of *Tochmarc Émire* (The Wooing of Emer) *Gall* means 'a Gaul,' in the later version 'a Norseman'; see Kuno Meyer in *Rev. Celt.*, xi, 438.

dinavians dwelt in the Scottish islands, and were also called by the Irish *Gaill*, 'strangers,' it came about naturally that a number of Scandinavian names were introduced into the tale.

In the later interpolation, reminiscences of events which happened at different times are fused together,<sup>1</sup> and consequently several historical features appear in an unhistorical form, as *e.g.* when we read of a king, instead of an earl, of the Orkneys. But I believe that the historical event which, above all others, left its impress on the story of Conchobar's Scandinavian auxiliaries, belongs to a much later time than that of which Zimmer, who does not explain satisfactorily the Norse names, is here thinking.<sup>2</sup>

This event is connected with the greatest battle fought in Ireland in the course of the long period during which Scandinavians had a firm foothold there—a battle which, indeed, had no momentous historical results, but whose fierceness and impressive shifting scenes fixed themselves firmly by means of poetic images in the minds of both Irish and Scandinavians.

<sup>1</sup> Among the auxiliaries there is named a son of a daughter of Conchobar mac Nessa, who thus would have lived long before the coming of the Norsemen to Ireland. He is said to be a son of Arthur, and a grandson of Brude. On this Zimmer remarks that Brude was the name of a mighty king of the Picts, who lived in the time of Columba (†584).

<sup>2</sup> One division of the reinforcements landed at the mouth of Linn Luachainne. This Zimmer takes to be 'ein ort in der Dundalk-bay, vielleicht am eingang an das haff, in das der Castletown-river fliesst.' In the landing of these reinforcements Zimmer (*Ztsch. f. d. Alt.*, xxxv, 162) finds a reminiscence of the landing of the Danes in 850 at *Linn Duachail*, a harbour on the coast of Louth, according to Hennessy probably Dundalk harbour.

I refer to the Battle of Clontarf<sup>1</sup> at Dublin in 1014 p. 50. between the Norse King of Dublin, Sigtrygg Silkbeard, and the Irish King Brian. Before the battle ships and reinforcements had come to Sigtrygg from nearly all the Scandinavian settlements in the west. That this circumstance left its impress on the description of the Battle of Ross na Ríg becomes clear when we compare the latter with the accounts of the Battle of Clontarf which we possess.

We read that, before the Battle of Clontarf took place, an Irish king got reinforcements from the Orkneys (*insi Orc*), the Shetland Islands (*insi Cat* or *insi Cadd*), and Lewis (O.N. *Ljóðhús*, Ir. *Leódús*); and this is the only time these places are named in the chronicle *Cogadh Gaidhel*. In the story of the Battle of Ross na Ríg we learn that an Irish king got reinforcements from the Orkneys, the Shetland Islands, and Lewis.

Conchobar sought help from *Siugraid Soga*, King of *Sudlam*. The latter has, in my opinion, as an historical prototype that Earl of the Orkneys who is called *Sigurðr Hlǫðvesson* in Icelandic documents. In *Cogadh Gaidhel* (p. 153) he is called *Siucraid*, in the Annals of Loch Cé (p. 5) *Siograd*. In the story this Siugraid is King of *Sudlam*, a name which hitherto has not been correctly explained, but which is evidently the O.N. dative *Suðreyjum*, from the Norse name of the Hebrides. In a similar way, the name *Suðreyjar* (nom. pl.), as was first pointed out by Munch, was carried over into English as *Sodor*. Earl Gille, brother-in-law of Earl Sigurth,

<sup>1</sup> On these events see especially Steenstrup, *Normannerne*, III, 157 ff, and Todd, *Cogadh Gaidhel*, Introd., pp. clxvii-cxcii.

ruled over the *Suðreyjar* (Southern Isles, Hebrides) as Sigurth's vassal; and paid tribute to him.<sup>1</sup>

p. 51. The surname *Soga* I take to be *sugga*, which in many modern Norwegian dialects means 'sow.' The king may have been so called on account of his heavy body, just as in the *Heimskringla* he has the surname *digri* (the thick).<sup>2</sup> Among Conchobar's reinforcements is named Amlaib (Óláf), grandson of the King of Lochlann. He is doubtless the same as the Amlaib (Óláf), son of the King of Lochlann, who fought in the Battle of Clontarf on Sigtrygg's side.

Both Conchobar and Sigtrygg get help from two chieftains, *Broder*<sup>3</sup> and *Mael*.<sup>4</sup> In the story we are told that Conall, when Conchobar sent messengers to him, was harrying, amongst other places, 'the ways of the Saxons.' According to *Cogadh Gaidhel*, messengers were sent before the Battle of Clontarf to all the districts north of 'the land of the Saxons.'<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See *Njálssaga*, chaps. 86, 90. The Irish name for the Hebrides is *insi Gall*, 'the Isles of the Strangers.' The later Irish redaction of the Battle of Ross na Ríg (Hogan, p. 62) has *Siogra rí Arcadía* (S., King of A.), where *Arcadía* is a corruption of *Orcadia*. In an older redaction may not Siugraid have been described as King of the Orkneys? Directly after Siugraid in the Book of Leinster, we have the name of *Sortadbud Sort*, King of the Orkneys. In an older redaction may not he have been described as King of *Sudlam*? *Sortadbud* corresponds to O.N. *Svarthefuð*. In the *Sturlungasaga*, *Svarthefði* is the name of an Iclander whose father has an Irish name.

<sup>2</sup> *Sugga* may still be used in Norway of a stout, portly woman. Cf. the name of the place *Suggarud* in Eystein's *Jordebog*, p. 495.

<sup>3</sup> Among the participants in the Battle of Clontarf both *Njálssaga* and the Irish sources name *Broder*. Among Conchobar's Scandinavian reinforcements are named *Brödor Roth* (i.e. *rauðr*, red) and *Brödor Fluit* (i.e. *hvítr*, white).

<sup>4</sup> *Cogadh Gaidhel B.* has *Maol*, while *A.* has *Conmael*.

<sup>5</sup> Saxons (i.e. Anglo-Saxons) are also named in the Annals of Boyle, and in the Annals of Loch Cé.

In the *Njálssaga*, Erling is said to come from *Straumey*, one of the Faroes, to Sigtrygg. *Báre* (i.e. O.N. *Bárþór*, later *Bárðr*) of *Sciggire* came to Conchobar from *Piscarcarla's* camp. *Sciggire* (i.e. O.N. *skeggjar*, 'bearded men') has been explained by Kuno Meyer as 'the inhabitants of the Faroes,' since they were most frequently called *Eyjarskeggjar*.<sup>1</sup> Yet the word is also used of people from the Scottish Isles. *Piscarcarla* means 'fishers' (O.N. *fiskikarlar*). Among the names of countries mentioned in the story of Conchobar, we find *Gothia* (i.e. Gautland, in Sweden), and in the Annals of Inisfallen (which, to be sure, are very late, and not to be relied on) it is said (p. 62) that folk came to the Battle of Clontarf 'from the most p. 52. central part of Gaothland' (*o na Gaothloighibh meodhanach*).<sup>2</sup>

In my opinion, there can, therefore, be no doubt that Conchobar's Scandinavian reinforcements, which came to him before the Battle of Ross na Ríg, have their historical prototype in the Scandinavian reinforcements which came to Sigtrygg Silkbeard before the Battle of

<sup>1</sup> For example, in *Fornmannasögur*, II, 169.

<sup>2</sup> The story of the Battle of Ross na Ríg is found, in a form which varies very much from the version of the Book of Leinster, in MSS. of the eighteenth century (printed in Hogan's edition). This redaction has the episode under discussion in a much shortened and evidently modified form; yet there is one expression in it which may have belonged to the episode in its oldest form, but which is lacking in the Book of Leinster. We read (p. 63) that Conchobar sent out a man to collect a large number of these strangers 'for good gifts and great payment to them.' With this cf. H. H., I, 21, 'to offer the men and their sons *abundance of gold*' (*iðgnógan ógnar ljóma*). On the other hand, we read of the Scandinavian reinforcements in the Battle of Clontarf in *Cogadh Gaidhel*, p. 153, that 'they sold and hired themselves for gold and silver and other treasures as well.'



Clontarf. But while the Irish accounts of the Battle of Clontarf were written down from the point of view of the enemies of the Scandinavians, the author of the story of the Battle of Ross na Ríg takes sides with Conchobar, whom the Norsemen were to aid. The episode was, therefore, in all probability foisted in by some Irishman who belonged to the party of the Scandinavian King of Dublin.

If, then, I am right in believing that the story of the Battle of Ross na Ríg contains reminiscences of the Scandinavian reinforcements which assisted Sigtrygg in the Battle of Clontarf in 1014, we may conclude that the expansion of that story, which we have been discussing here, must in its extant form be later than 1014.

By a comparison of the Helgi-lay with the Irish tale of Conchobar's reinforcements, I have tried to prove that certain verses from the former show familiarity with an Irish story, and that the relations are not the reverse.

Thus, I believe, a means has been found of dating  
 p. 53. pretty definitely the First Lay of Helgi Hundingsbani. It cannot have been composed before ca. 1020-1035. It requires, of course, a little time for an historical incident to come to be treated poetically, especially when a story serves as an intermediary; but, nevertheless, the First Lay cannot have been composed much later than the date assigned, since the Icelandic skalds in the forties of the eleventh century show traces of its influence.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> As I have pointed out above; see Chap. II, and App. I. Maurer, from the fact that the hero in the First Helgi-lay went into battle when fifteen years of age, concluded that the poem was not older than the eleventh century. Sijmons supported the same opinion in *Ztsch. f. d. Phil.*, xviii,

In what precedes I think I have given good reasons for believing that the author of the First Helgi-lay lived among the Irish, that he understood their language, and that he was not unfamiliar with their tales. Nor, in my opinion, is it going far enough to say that he heard an Irish account of the Battle of Ross na Ríg freely rendered. Some of the expressions in the Helgi-lay resemble so closely those in the text of the Book of Leinster, that it looks as if the Helgi-poet must have come to know the Irish story by hearing it read aloud in Irish.

Since it appears that the Irish episode of the Scandinavian reinforcements was composed by an Irishman who belonged to the party of the King of Dublin, and since the author of the First Helgi-lay lived at a king's court in England or Ireland, we are justified in concluding that this poet was for a time at the court of the Scandinavian King of Dublin. Probably he knew that the reinforcements which, according to the Irish story, came to Conchobar, came in reality to Sigtrygg at Dublin.

One of the reasons why the poet introduced several p. 54 motives from the Irish story into the Helgi-poems may be that the Helgi-story had previously certain similarities with the historical events which the Battle of Clontarf described. Helgi fights with the father and kinsmen of his loved Sigrún, and her father and only brother fall. On the battlefield Helgi speaks with Sigrún about the fight. At the Battle of Clontarf the

112-115. Finnur Jónsson (*Litt. Hist.*, 1, 66) puts it at ca. 1000-1025. In my *Bidrag*, p. 49, I did not dare assign its composition to so late a date as that adopted by these scholars.



following events actually took place:—Sigtrygg fought against Brian, whose daughter he had married, and in the battle fell her father, her only brother, and some of her kinsmen. Sigtrygg and his wife stood and looked at the fighting, and talked together about it. But this is almost the whole extent of the resemblance. Sigtrygg himself did not take part in the fight.

It may be added that valkyries and other female supernatural beings are brought into connection with the Battle of Clontarf, and that battle-maidens appear in the conflict in the Helgi-lay.

I have already (p. 26 f) compared the kenning which designates the slain on the battlefield as 'the grain of Hugin (Odin's raven),' in the description of the fight in which Helgi conquers Hothbrodd (H. H., I, 54), with the words spoken by those who looked from the walls of Dublin over the battlefield of Clontarf, and likened it to a field of grain which reapers were mowing. This comparison is now of greater moment, since we have seen that the poetic description of a battle in the Helgi-lay appears to have borrowed features indirectly from the historical combat on the plain of Clontarf.

The First Lay of Helgi Hundingsbani was then, it seems, composed ca. 1020-1035 by a Norse poet who had lived in Ireland. The author had before him in imagination pictures of the heathen world, and there is no sure trace in his poem that he was a Christian. Heathen gods and other mythical beings are introduced, and have a part to play. Helgi's enemies are the subjects of Odin's wrath, and Odin's dogs (wolves) rush about the island; the Norns decide the hero's fate; and Ægir's daughters and Rán try to upset his ship in the

storm. But the supernatural world is not treated with reverence. Sinfjötli says that all the *einherjar* in the hall of the All-Father (Odin) were near fighting because of one valkyrie, and she was a great witch. Here the poet's disdain for the heathen supernatural world appears to reveal itself.

The introduction of heathen mythical beings into the poem does not prove that the author was not baptized; for it is only in the remote past that he makes the gods and other mythical beings appear, and, as a matter of fact, these were often referred to long after the introduction of Christianity. There was current, for example, a story that Odin visited a peasant at Vestfold, in the south of Norway, shortly before the battle of Lena, in Sweden, in 1208.

The poem dates from the time when heathendom as a recognised religion, or at least as a religion personally professed, was on the point of dying out among Scandinavians in the west. As early as 943, King Óláf Kvaran had himself baptized in England, and in his last years (979) he went as a pilgrim to Icolmkill. The viking Broder, who took part in the Battle of Clontarf, was at one time a Christian, but afterwards renounced the faith and paid worship to the heathen powers. After this same battle the Scandinavians in Ireland began to adopt the new religion in earnest, and in the next generation bishoprics were founded in the Norse cities there.<sup>1</sup>

I have given reasons for my opinion that the Helgi-poet lived for a time at the court of the Scandinavian

<sup>1</sup> See Steenstrup, *Normannerne*, III, 172; cf. Zimmer, *Gött. Gel. Anz.*, 1891 (No. 5), p. 184.

King Sigtrygg at Dublin early in the eleventh century. Ólaf Kvaran, father of Sigtrygg, and son-in-law of the Scottish king, ruled both at Dublin and in Northumberland, and made an expedition into the heart of England. It is, therefore, natural that a Norse poet at Sigtrygg's court should show traces of having been influenced by both English and Irish poetry.

## VI

THE FIRST HELGI-LAY AND THE IRISH TALE OF  
THE DESTRUCTION OF TROY.

- p. 56. FROM what precedes we have learned something of the relations of the author of the First Helgi-lay to Irish literature. His lay is by no means a translation of Irish stories, nor is it even a free working-over which follows Irish models step by step. Taking as a basis Germanic heroic saga-material, already treated in older lays, the Norse poet created an altogether new and original poem about the careers of certain Scandinavian personages, especially the hero Helgi Hundingsbani, —a poem in which Norse ideas and Norse views of life are definitely expressed. The preponderating influence in forming his style and mode of presentation, and the decisive factor in determining the poetical form of his lay, were the older Scandinavian heroic and mythical poems, especially the lays on the Völsungs, Niflungs, and Buthlungs, but, above all, the older lays of Helgi Hundingsbani.

All these poems had themselves been subjected to

much foreign influence. But the First Helgi-lay, with regard particularly to certain sections and motives in the action, with regard also to its development and scope, and to some extent its proper names, contains additional foreign elements. Some of these elements are Irish; and the Irish influence on the poetic phraseology has also become stronger than in the older poems. The foreign features, however, are all grouped about personages belonging to the Scandinavian Helgi-cycle. The action takes place in and about Denmark, or, at any rate, in places the names of which did not sound strange to the Scandinavian ear.<sup>1</sup>

More light will, I hope, be thrown upon the literary p. 57. relations just defined by my pointing out that another Irish story has been made use of in the Helgi-lay.

There are several Irish narratives of the Destruction of Troy, all more or less related to one another. The oldest known version is that found in the Book of Leinster, a MS. of about the middle of the twelfth century.<sup>2</sup> Part of another version, closely related to the first, though not drawn from it, is preserved in a MS. of the fourteenth century or the beginning of the fifteenth.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is instructive at this point to compare the influence of Roman literature on Irish literature. The Old Irish *imrama*, or tales of sea-voyages, such, e.g., as that in which *Maelduin* is the central figure, are, as Zimmer has shown, in great part composed with Virgil's *Æneid* as a model, although the events narrated are ascribed to Irish characters, and domestic saga-material is used. See Zimmer in *Ztsch. f. d. Alt.*, xxxiii, 328 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *The Book of Leinster* (Dublin, 1880), fol. 217a-244b, and *Togail Troi. The Destruction of Troy, transcribed . . . and translated . . . by Whitley Stokes*, Calcutta, 1881.

<sup>3</sup> In MS. H. 2, 17, Trinity College, Dublin. Edited, with translation, by Whitley Stokes in *Irische Texte*, II (Heft 1), Leipzig, 1884, pp. 1-142. Fragments of the same version in a record of the sixteenth century in the Book of Leinster. Cf. Zimmer, *Gött. Gel. Anz.*, 1890, No. 12, p. 501.

The chief source of the Irish Destruction of Troy is the *Historia de Excidio Trojae* of Dares Phrygius;<sup>1</sup> but the original is treated very freely and much extended. The Irish author has embodied in his work many features, some of which he took from other Latin writings and from Irish tales, others which he himself invented in accordance with Irish ideas. The narrative style, with its richness of phraseology (*e.g.* in the descriptions of battle, sailing, equipments, etc.), and numerous alliterative epithets, is the same as that used in contemporary Irish accounts of domestic affairs in Ireland at that time.

The story begins by telling of Saturn, his sons and descendants. Among them was Ilus, who first built Troy, and his son Laomedon. It then goes on to speak of Jason and the expedition of the Argonauts, in which Hercules took part. Laomedon offended the Argonauts by chasing them away from the harbour of Troy. In the next section Hercules is the leading figure. In order to revenge the dishonour which the Argonauts had suffered, he collects an army and ships from the  
 p. 58, whole of Greece, and sets sail with his fleet to Troy. He is victorious, kills Laomedon, and destroys the city. Then follows the main part of the story, an account of the second destruction of Troy in the reign of Priam.

In my opinion, the Irish version was known by the author of the First Helgi-lay, who borrowed, particularly from the section which deals with the Trojan expedition of Hercules, a number of motives, expressions, and names, which he used especially in the last part of his

<sup>1</sup> On this work cf. my *Studien über die Entstehung der Nordischen Götter- u. Heldensagen*; see Index, p. 585 (Norw. ed., p. 567).



account of Helgi's war with Høthbrodd. The story of the Hercules expedition was thus used together with the similar story of the Scandinavian reinforcements in the Battle of Ross na Ríg.

The story of Hercules, like that of the Battle of Ross na Ríg, resembles the Helgi-poem in its general features. Hercules, wishing to revenge the wrong done him by the Trojans, goes about to the various parts of Greece to assemble troops to aid him, and when ready, sends out messengers bidding them come to the place where he himself is. The great fleet assembles and sails out among the islands of the sea. Aided by a favourable wind, the ships soon reach the harbour of Sigeum. When Laomedon learns that a hostile fleet has anchored there, he hastens to the harbour, and makes an attack on the Greeks. But Hercules had meanwhile marched with half his army by another route to Troy. In Laomedon's absence they storm the city, and, after securing great booty, commit it to the flames. Then they make their way to the ships. Laomedon, learning of the destruction of his city, turns back to attack Hercules and his men. There ensues a battle, which is described at length in glowing colours. It results in the complete defeat of the Trojans and the fall of Laomedon by the hand of Hercules. The latter then divides the booty, and gives Hesione, the daughter of Laomedon, to Telamon. p. 59. Hercules and his allies return to their several homes. All are friendly to Hercules when they separate.

It is worth noting, as regards the general situation, that, while in the story of Ross na Ríg the fleet lands in three divisions among friends, Helgi's fleet, on the

contrary, comes in a single body to a hostile land: this agrees not only with the older Helgi-story, but also with the story of Hercules, whose fleet also comes united to the land of his enemies.

In the following comparison of details I follow principally the oldest version of the Irish story, that in the Book of Leinster, which we may call A. The later version in the MS. which is printed in *Irische Texte*, we may call B. The line-numbers are those of Stokes.

In A 527 ff, we read of Hercules: 'When he had all things in readiness and quickness and promptitude, he sent messengers to the kings and princes, to the chieftains and champions, who had proposed with him to go on the journey. When notices and messages had reached them, they came at the call of Hercules. . . . When they had all arrived at one stead, they took counsel.'

In comparing with this certain strophes of the Helgilay, we must look at the matter as a whole. I do not imply that these strophes can (strictly speaking) prove that the Norse poet knew the Irish story; and we must also bear in mind the relations already pointed out between the poem and the Battle of Ross na Ríg. H. H., I, 21-22, reads: 'Thereupon the king sent messengers . . . over the sea to beg for help, and to offer the chieftains and their sons abundance of gold. "Bid them go quickly to their ships and be ready at (?) Brandey." There the king waited until the men came thither (?) in hundreds from Hethinsey.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> H. H., I, 21, *sendi dru*, and A 527, *rofiid techta*, both mean the same thing: 'sent messengers.' With the O.N. *brögnum ok burum þeira*, 'to chieftains and their sons,' cf. the Irish *cosna rígu ocus cosna ríglamna*,

Farther on in the Helgi-poem, we read that twelve.p. 60.  
hundred men have sailed into Qrvasund (I, 25), and  
after the arrival of the fleet in the land of their enemies,  
we learn that there are seven thousand out in the fjord,  
while fifteen companies<sup>1</sup> have landed (I, 50).

This way of giving the number of ships and of the  
crew of great fleets seems to have come into Old Norse  
poems partly from foreign literature, partly from a  
knowledge of the large western fleets.<sup>2</sup> According to  
the Irish story, the ships of Hercules and his allies  
numbered 106. There were 1222 ships (A 1207) in  
the Greek fleet which set out in the second expedition  
against Troy. In B 135, we read: 'The kings, who  
had promised, came unto him with thousands and hosts  
and armies.'<sup>3</sup>

A 528, 'to kings and princes.' With *skjöttliga*, 'quickly,' H. H., I, 22,  
cf. *i n-lími*, 'in quickness,' A 517; with *búna*, 'ready,' cf. *i n-urlaimi*,  
'in readiness,' etc.

<sup>1</sup> There seems to be a connection between the 'fifteen companies (*fólk*)'  
in H. H. and the expression '*quindena simul vexilla micantia vidi*,' in  
a verse in the saga of Frotho in Saxo (ed. Müller, v, p. 237). On the  
contrary, I do not dare to suggest any connection with the statement of  
Dares Phrygius (chap. 3) that the fleet of Hercules consisted of fifteen  
ships, since the Irish account says that the ships of Hercules and his allies  
were 106 in number.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. A. Olrik, *Saksas Oldhist.*, II, 249: 'To this tendency to make  
modern by fulness of description (in the story of Hagbarthus in Saxo),  
belongs also . . . the statement of the number of the fleet of the sons of  
Sigar. The numbering of ships occurs elsewhere only in the O.N. sagas  
in Saxo.'

<sup>3</sup> When Helgi's fleet assembles, the king announces that 1200 faithful  
men have come sailing in into Qrvasund, but that twice as many are  
*i Hátúnum* (H. H., I, 25). It is from this scene that the name was, in  
my opinion, carried over to I, 8, where *Hátún* is named among the places  
which the father gives his new-born son (just as, directly after, *Himin-  
vanga* was carried over from the scene in I, 15). Finn Magnussen thinks



- p. 61. The sailing is described only in the Book of Leinster, not in B. In A 535, it runs thus: 'Those ships and galleys were then set on the strong, heavy-stormed Tyrrhene sea and on the blue deep main, and on the furrowed, islanded, isleted country of their uneternal, undivine god Neptune.'

Here (as in the story of Ross na Ríg), the expression for 'ships and vessels,' *na longa ocus na laidenga*, resembles the *langhofðuð skip und liðundum* in H. H., I, 24, 'the long-beaked ships with seamen aboard.' Here also we have the alliteration on *l*. Irish *láideng* is a loan-word from O.N. *leiðangr*, 'a levy of ships for war,' which is related to *liðendr*, 'seamen.'

The Norse poet introduces Rán and Ægir's daughters, dwellers in the sea. The Irish narrator names Neptune. The expressions which he uses to describe the sea might well have been models for O.N. ken-

*Hátún*, *Hátúnir*, the same as *Tune*, a district by the Kjöge Bay in Zealand. This explanation seems to me improbable, since it does not explain the initial *hð*. I suggest the following explanation as another possibility:

In the Irish Destruction of Troy the Greek fleet, which in Priam's time is to set out against Troy, is assembled in the harbour of Athens, A 1110: *co airerphort na hathaine (h'Athaine)*, 'to the harbour of Athens'; A 1160, *la airerphort na hathaini*, 'at the haven of Athens.' 'One could,' we read, 'see the sea filled with ships, when one stood on the beautiful heights of Athens' (*for arddaib imaebla na hathaine*, A 1146). The name *Hátún*, 'high-lying town,' may be a Norse working-over of that name. In Hym. 19, we find *hátún*, 'high-lying enclosed place,' used as an appellative.

If *Hátún* in H. H., I, 25, be another name for Athens, *Hátún* in H. H., I, 8, may have been mentioned among the places which Sigmund gave his son, because the Wolddietrich poem which influenced the poet, may have mentioned Athens among the places given to Wolddietrich by his father; for Athens occurs in several German Wolddietrich poems as a city ruled by Hugdietrich. Cf. p. 89 (margin).

nings.<sup>1</sup> But the Norse poet followed the Irish account of the Scandinavian reinforcements in making the fleet encounter a violent storm, while Hercules had all the way a favourable wind.

In A 538 f, we read: 'They sailed and they rowed unweariedly and untiredly.' Likewise in H. H., I, 26-27: 'The chieftains hoisted the sails to the masts, . . . the vikings rowed; the king's fleet with the nobles on board went whizzing from the land.'

After the storm Helgi's ships lay *in the evening* together in a bay by the sea-shore (H. H., I, 31). The fleet of Hercules anchored *in the night* in the harbour of Sigeum. Hercules marched with half of the army against Troy, whilst the second division, under Castor, Pollux, and Nestor, remained by the ships. When p. 62. Laomedon was told that a Greek fleet had anchored at Sigeum he was very angry, and set out immediately against his enemies. In the Norse, Hothbrodd also was informed that a hostile fleet had come. 'Fifteen companies went up on land, but seven thousand were still out in the fjord.' Thus, here too the army was divided into two parts, of which one remained by the ships.

The words which I have translated 'out in the fjord' read in H. H., I, 50:—

*er í Sogn út  
sjau þúsundir.*

Here *Sogn* must mean a fjord or a harbour.<sup>2</sup> There is

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 'Neptune's land' (*lir Neptuin*) with 'Rán's land' (*land Ránar*), 'the blue land' (*ferand forglas*), with *blámar*, used by Eyvind Skálda-spillir. *Blaamyra*, 'the blue mire,' is, however, still used in Norway.

<sup>2</sup> In *Völsungasaga* we read: *við ey þá, er Sok heitir*, where the word *Sogn* is altered, and *ey* shows that the passage was misunderstood.

nothing to indicate that the word as an appellative had such a meaning in ordinary prose at the time when the poem was composed, although *Sogn*, used in Norway as the name of a fjord, rivers, and farmsteads, comes from *súga*, 'to suck,' and is related with *sog*, 'suction, stream.' The word *Sogn* in the announcement to Høthbrodd must have been used for some particular reason.

In the Irish story (B 143), it is said: 'Thereafter Laomedon was told that a great host of Greeks had seized the port of Sigeum.' The Book of Leinster has here *i port Ségi*, and in two other places the form *Ségi*; while B has twice (140, 144) *Sygei*. This was its form, as I suppose, in the Irish MS. from which, directly or indirectly, the Helgi-poet learned to know the story. Dares Phrygius has: 'Laomedonti regi nuntiatum est classem Graecorum ad Sigeum accessisse.' The Norse poet introduces regularly native, or apparently native, names for the foreign ones before him. For the *port Sygei*, 'the harbour of Sigeum,' in the Irish there was no native name nearer than the adjective *sygnskr*, and *Sygnir*, 'the people by the Sognefjord,' which comes from *Sogn*.<sup>1</sup> It was for this reason, in my opinion, that the Norse poet let the announcement be given that Helgi's ships lay out *i Sogn*, 'on the Sognefjord,' the expression being modelled after *port Sygei*, 'the harbour of Sigeum,' where, as it was reported to Laomedon, the Greek fleet had anchored.

When Høthbrodd learned of the coming of his enemies, he sent out riders to summon help. To the

<sup>1</sup> Pontius (Pilate) becomes in O.N. *enn Poudverski*; the Irish *insi Orc* becomes O.N. *Orkneyjar*, where *n* is added.

strophe of the Helgi-lay which tell of this, the Irish account of Laomedon affords no parallel. On the other hand, the latter, before telling how Hercules sent out messengers to induce his allies to come to him in haste, says that he himself went about in Greece to get promises of help; but the Helgi-lay reports nothing similar of Helgi.

But even here the Norse poem seems to show connection with the Irish tale; for the strophes which tell how Høthbrodd sought help appear to have been influenced by the Irish account of how Hercules sought help. We read of Høthbrodd in H. H., I, 51:

*Renni raukn bitluð  
til reginþinga.*

'Let bitted trotters<sup>1</sup> run to the great meetings.' The word *reginþinga* is used to denote the meeting-places frequented by many men. Then follows:

*en Sporvitnir  
at Sparinsheiði.*

'(The steed) Sporvitnir (*i.e.* 'the animal which is spurred') to Sparin's heath.'<sup>2</sup> No satisfactory explanation of this place has hitherto been given. The Irish tale of Hercules seems, however, to throw light on it. A 474, reads: 'Then he went to beseech the kings and p. 64. the captains and the champions to go with him to

<sup>1</sup> Riders are not named in connection with Hercules. On the contrary, we read of Laomedon: *cum equestri copia ad mare venit et coepit proeliari* (Dares, ch. 3). The extant Irish versions, however, do not mention riders, but only troops in general.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Grani rann at þingi*, Guthr., II, 4; *svað segir . . . at Sigurð . . . hefði til þings riðit*, Sæm. Edda, p. 241.

avenge on the Trojans his sigh and his groan.' He went first to the kings of Sparta (*co rígu Sparte*<sup>1</sup>). In *Sparins heiðr* I see a Norse working-over of *Sparta*. The Norse name was formed in its first part to resemble *Varinsfjörðr* and *Svarinshaugr* in the same poem; and an attempt was made to give a familiar native look and sound to the foreign word.<sup>2</sup>

The second place to which Hercules goes for help is *Salamis*. We have seen that *Sparta*, which in the Irish tale is named in connection with Hercules, became in the O.N. poem a place which was named in connection with Høthbrodd, and here we have another example of the same thing. In A 485, we read: *corríg Salamána*, 'to the king of Salamána,' in A 489 *Salamona*, in B 81 in the Accus. *Salamiam*, in B 90, 94, in the Gen. *Salamiae*, in Dares *Salaminam*. Now the place in which Høthbrodd is when the messengers bear him the ill news of Helgi's coming, is called *Sólheimar* (see H. H., I, 47). In my opinion this is a Norse modification of *Salamona*, or rather *Salamina*. This modification was due to the fact that *Sólheimar* as the name of a place was familiar in both Norway and Iceland. The name of the foreign city could have

<sup>1</sup> A 477. '*Spartam ad Castorem et Pollucem venit*' (Dares, ch. 3).

<sup>2</sup> In Layamon's *Brut* (ed. Madden, I, p. 26) we read:

*þe king [Pandrasus] sende swa wide  
swa leste his riche,  
& heihte eulne mon  
þe mihte riden ofer gan  
to þane castle of SPARATIN* (594 ff).

*Sparinn* in *Sparinsheiðr* might be thought of as related to *spara* as *Muninn* to *muna*, or as *Huginn* to *hyggja*, *hugat*. Therefore, the poet may possibly have conceived of *Sparinsheiðr* as 'the heath sparsely settled.' As to the grammatical form, cf. *Feginsbrekka*.

become by popular etymology the name of a place p. 65. whose second part was the A.S. *hām*, corresponding to the O.N. *heimr*, 'a home, a dwelling-place.'<sup>1</sup> *Salamina* is the name of Telamon's royal abode; that of King Høthbrodd is called *Sólheimar*.<sup>2</sup>

Directly after having named the places to which the messengers are to ride with all speed to get help, Høthbrodd says (I, 51):

*látið engi mann  
eptir sitja  
þeira er benlogum  
bregða kunni.*

'Let no man sit at home who knows how to swing

<sup>1</sup> Cf. O.N. *þaðreimr*=M.H.G. *podcrām* from *hippodromus*. In the *Grettissaga*, p. 203, *þorsteinn* appears instead of *Tristan*. As regards the *h* in *Sólheimar*, cf. on the one hand *Trollhæna* from *Triduana*, and note on the other that A.S. *hām* and O.N. *heimr* as the second element of a word may lose their *h*. The vowels in the first syllable presented no absolute hindrance in the way of the modification, for in the first place Snorri connects (incorrectly) *Sóleyjar* with *Splvi*, and further, as I have previously pointed out, *Óðr* is a modification of *Adon*. See my remarks in *Forhandlingar þaa det andet nordiske Filologmøde*, p. 326, where I have also given several examples of the change of *a* in foreign names to O.N. *ó*.

<sup>2</sup> Hercules goes, in the third place, 'to the prince and emperor of Moesidia (i.e. Magnesia ?),' *co rurich oculus imper Moesidhie*, B 96. (The name of the place has fallen out in A; Dares has: *ad Phthiam*.) In H. H., I, 51, after Høthbrodd has given commands for one steed and rider to run to *Sparinsheiðr*, he continues by naming two steeds: *Mélnir* (i.e. the steed with the bit) and *Mýlnir* (i.e. the steed with the halter) who are to ride 'til *Myrkviðar*' (i.e. to Mirk-wood). This *Myrkviðar* may possibly be a Norse modification of *Moesidhie*; but I hesitate to say so definitely. At any rate, the word is so inclusive and indefinite that Müllenhoff was wrong in saying (*Ztsch. f. d. Alt.*, N. F., XI, 170): 'Myrcviðr beweist dass auch die "südliche" Sigrun hier als eine deutsche gemeint und zu nehmen ist.' This supposed proof is no proof, for, as may be seen in Fritzner's dictionary, *myrkviðr* was used as an appellative, and the word occurs as the name of a place in both Norway and Sweden.

swords.' This is modelled after Telamon's words to  
 p. 66. Hercules in the Irish story, when the latter came to the  
 former for aid. In B 90 we read: 'With us . . . shall  
 go the inhabitants of Salamia, *whoso shall take spear in  
 his hand and is fit to know how to wield weapons.*' In  
 A 490 ff, the passage runs thus: 'I will go with thee  
 and the dwellers of Salamona both old and young,  
 whosoever is fit to take arms and is daring to carry  
 weapons.'

The sending out of the messengers in the Helgi-  
 lay is immediately followed by the description of the  
 battle in which Høthbrodd falls. In my opinion this  
 account was influenced to some extent by the detailed  
 pictorial description of the battle between Hercules and  
 Laomedon in version A of the Irish story.

There Hercules in the heat of battle is thus described :  
 (A 599 ff): 'Then came the rage and the might and  
 the great wrath of the soldier Hercules, and *his bird of  
 valour rose over his breath and kept flying round his head,*  
 and he made a savage rush (?) at the Trojans, like the  
 outburst of a flood, or like a flash of lightning.'<sup>1</sup> This  
 representation of the battle-bird occurs also in Irish  
 traditional tales, and is connected with the belief that  
 the war-goddess or war-fury Morrigan appears as a  
 bird.<sup>2</sup> In the description of the battle before Troy in  
 Priam's time, the Irish tale has united both ideas:  
 'their birds of valour ascended over their breaths . . .  
 white broad-mouthed battle-goddesses rose over their  
 heads.'<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> We read of Achilles also when in the battle (A 2033): 'His bird of  
 valour rose up until it was flying over his head.'

<sup>2</sup> See Hennessy in *Rev. Celt.*, 1, 32-57.

<sup>3</sup> *Atrachtatar badba bána bellethna osa cennaib*, A 1706-1708.

## THE DESTRUCTION OF TROY 63

Instead of these wild Irish conceptions, the Helgi-poet inserted the nobler pictures of the battle-maidens coming armed from the heavens, when the battle was in progress, to protect Helgi, and strike down his opponents. p. 67. The Irish 'bird of valour' became 'a flying wound-wight' (*sárvitr fluga*, I, 54).

The Irish story concludes one section with the account of Laomedon's fall and the defeat of the Trojans. In A 687 ff, we read: 'Thereafter they (*i.e.* the Greeks) returned to their own country, and each of them bids farewell to the other, and all separate in peace and goodwill from Hercules. *Finit.*' Then begins certain chronological statements on entirely different matters. In the other version (B 170), the passage runs as follows: 'So when all that came to an end, each leader of them went to his land with victory and triumph.'

The conclusion of the Helgi-lay represents Sigrún, Helgi's victory-genius, as congratulating him on his victory and on the fall of Høthbrodd. The last line is: *þá er sókn lokit*, 'then is the fight over.'<sup>1</sup> This may be compared with the closing word *Finit* in version A, or with the words 'when all that came to an end' in version B.

Though the author of the First Helgi-lay knew older verses which told of Helgi's fate after Høthbrodd's fall, he nevertheless brought his poem to an end at this point, being influenced, as I believe, by the fact that the Irish story closed with the account of the defeat of the Trojans and the fall of Laomedon. He has thus given us a well-rounded poem with a very effective

<sup>1</sup> This line certainly belonged originally to the poem, for it was imitated in *þá var sókn lokit* (Fms., VII, 49) in a verse by Gísli Illugason.



ending. We see the hero in the closing scene radiant with the glow of victory.

The last section of the Irish story, which deals with the expedition of the Greeks against Troy when Priam was king, seems to have had no definite influence on the Helgi-lay.<sup>1</sup>

- p. 68. Zimmer has shown that the story of the Destruction of Troy belonged, as early as the close of the tenth century, to the repertory of Irish story-tellers.<sup>2</sup> Stokes remarks that the Annals of the Four Masters mention a man named *Dariet* the Learned, who died in 948,<sup>3</sup> and Zimmer notes that the Ulster annals call a certain hero, who fell in 942, the Hector of the western world. Moreover, according to Zimmer, the Destruction of Troy in the Book of Leinster may go back to the beginning of the eleventh century.

My supposition, that the Norse poet, about 1020-1035, learned to know the Destruction of Troy in Ireland, most probably in Dublin, agrees therefore completely

<sup>1</sup> Yet it is perhaps possible that what the messengers of Priam tell the king regarding the Greek fleet which has assembled and put to sea against him, as well as the description of the fleet sailing towards Troy, which the

p. 68. Irish author expands and paints in glowing colours, may, in connection with other similar Irish tales, have influenced the Norse poet when he described Helgi's fleet, which assembled and put to sea in like manner, and when he made Granmar's sons bring to Høthbrodd information of the coming of the enemy.—Cf. e.g., *brindýr blásvört*, II. II., 1, 50, 'blue-black surf-deer,' with *nóithi . . . degduba*, A 1340, 'bright-black ships.' In II. H., 1, 23, I suggest *beit svört*, 'black ships,' as a better reading. In A 1402 the ships have applied to them (among others) the adjectives 'blue, glittering.' In A 1401 they are said to be 'arrayed with shields'; cf. II. H., 1, 27: *brast rønd við rønd*, 'shield crashed against shield.'

<sup>2</sup> *Gött. Gel. Anz.*, 1890 (No. 12), p. 500 f.

<sup>3</sup> See preface to *Togail Troi*.

with all that Irish literary history has to tell us of the history of this document.

It appears, then, that the author of the First Helgi-lay was a literary, and, so far as the times and the circumstances of his life allowed, what we may call a learned man. He was evidently a poet by profession. We have every reason to believe that he either wrote down his poem himself or dictated it to a scribe.

Nor do I now see any reason for denying that the poem, as it lies before us in the Edda collection, goes back through many intermediaries to a form arranged by the author himself. In my opinion it is not necessary to suppose—it is even improbable—that the poem as we have it was written down in Iceland after the oral rendering of a poem which had earlier been preserved *only* in the memory of reciters. True, the text contains a number of corruptions, and several lines have fallen out; but these defects can be easily explained by the inaccuracy of the scribes. Taken as a whole, the poem appears to have been completely preserved, and no interpolation of any length is manifest.

By a comparison of the Norse lay with the Irish story of the Battle of Ross na Ríog, by which the Norse poet was influenced, we see the difference, which Zimmer has pointed out, between the Celtic and the Germanic poetic style and mode of literary presentation. The Irish records of traditional heroic saga take the form of prose stories interspersed with verses of a lyric or dramatic character. The Norse poet, on the contrary, treats his subject in the rhythms of the heroic lay.

A Norwegian in Norway would scarcely have introduced the *Sognefjord* among places unknown in Norway, such as *Móinsheimar* and *Sparinsheiðr*. The author of the Helgi-lay, however, may well have done so, for he lived in the west, far from Norway. Yet this name seems to be a reminiscence of the poet's native land, for there is another name in his poem which makes it highly probable that he was born in the western part of Norway, and that in his early days he himself knew the Sognefjord. In St. 39, Sinfjötli says to Sigmund: 'Together we got at *Sága-ness* (*á nesi Ságu*) nine children, who were wolves.' This name recurs in the name of a country-seat, *Saagnes* (pronounced *Såones* or *Sånes*), in the west of Norway.<sup>1</sup>

p. 70. The older written forms of this name, which Professor Rygh has kindly noted for me, are: *saaghonæs*, Bj. Kalfsk., 28b, *saghones*, Bj. Kalfsk., 52b.<sup>2</sup> I may add that in western Norway there still exist places with the names *Soleim* (cf. H. H., I, 47, *Sólheima til*), *Arasteinn* (cf. H. H., I, 14), and *þórsnes* (cf. H. H., I, 40).<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gaard-Nr. 81 in Bø Sogn, Hyllestad Præstegjæld, near the Sognesø, Nordre Bergenhus Amt.

<sup>2</sup> So in MS., not *laghones* as in the edition. *Sanenes* in an addition to the *Codex Diplom. Monasterii Muncalivensis* of the sixteenth century in D. N., XII, 223, is doubtless a mistake for *Sauenes*. *Saffnes* in 1563; *Saggenes* in 1603; *Sogenes* in 1611.

<sup>3</sup> *Soleim*—country-seats are so-called in Dale Sogn, Ytre Holmedal Herred, Nordre Bergenhus Amt (Matr. Gaard-Nr. 96); Lavik (Gaard-Nr. 9) in Ytre Sogn; Aarstad Sogn (Matr. Gaard-Nr. 7) in Nordhordland. —*Arastein*, a country-seat in Ytre Holmedal (Gaard-Nr. 34); cf. O. Rygh, *Trondhjemske Gaardnavne*, II, 159 f.—*þórsnes* is well known as a place-name in the district of Bergen. It occurs, as Professor Rygh informs me, in Balestrand, Sogn, and in Jondal, Hardanger.—That the uncommon word *eisandi* (H. H., I, 27) was used in Sogn in western Norway we see from the name of the river Eisand in the district of Borgund.

VII

THE RELATION OF THE FIRST HELGI-LAY TO THE  
WOLFDIETRICH STORY.

VARIOUS High-German poets celebrate Wölfdietrich, the son of Hüge Dietrich (or Hügdietrich). Müllenhoff has tried to prove<sup>1</sup> that this legendary hero had his historical prototype in the Merovingian King Theodebert († 547), son of Theodoric († 534). Theodoric is referred to in the Quedlinburg Annals<sup>2</sup> of the beginning of the eleventh century as '*Hugo Theodoricus, . . . id est Francus, quia olim omnes Franci Hugones vocabantur a suo quodam duce Hugone.*' Widukind (the second half of the tenth century) says (I, 9) that *Thiadricus* was the son of *Huga*. The so-called Poeta Saxo (about 890) testifies (v. 119) that this Theodoric was the subject of songs (*Theodricos . . . canunt*). There can be no doubt that the Hüge Dietrich of poetic saga got his name *Hüge* from the Frankish Theodoric. This name must have been applied to him in some Frankish form of the heroic poem. But originally he was, I suppose, intended to represent the East-Gothic Theodoric; and the poem, which in its oldest form must have been Gothic, originally treated of his birth and his early life in the Balkan peninsula.<sup>3</sup> The Wölfdietrich-saga is now chiefly known to us from several High-German

<sup>1</sup> See *Ztsch. f. d. Alt.*, VI, 435-460.

<sup>2</sup> *Mon. Germ.*, SS, III, 31.

<sup>3</sup> I hope to give my reasons for this opinion at another time. Cf. W. Müller, *Mythol. d. d. Heldensage*, pp. 202 ff.

poems of a 'popular' epic character (*Spielmannsdichtungen*) of the thirteenth century,<sup>1</sup> varying more or less from one another.

Wolfdietrich A is found in a unique MS. of the year 1517. It serves as a continuation of *Ortnit*, which in its original form was composed, not before 1231, by a poet of Bavarian-Austrian nationality, perhaps from the Tyrol. In language, style, and metre, Wolfdietrich A resembles *Ortnit* so closely that it must be the work either of the same poet or of an imitator who lived in the first half of the thirteenth century. Yet this is true only of that part which takes us up to the twelfth adventure. What follows (v. 506 ff) was composed by a different poet, and shows the influence of Wolfdietrich B. The MS. ends with the sixteenth adventure (after v. 606), and the conclusion of this version of the story is known only from a poor summary (K).

Wolfdietrich B is believed to have been composed about 1225 by a Bavarian poet. It has as an introduction, not *Ortnit*, but a tale of Hugdietrich's love-making. Only the first two sections are extant in their original  
p. 72. full extent. The four following sections are known from a shortened version, of less poetic value, supposed to date from about 1250.

Of Wolfdietrich C, which is thought to have had its origin in Frankish Bavaria, not before 1250, only a few fragments are preserved. Like Wfd. A the poem is united with *Ortnit*. This is likewise the case with D, the most extensive of all the German versions, formed from B and C with many changes and amplifications,

<sup>1</sup> See *Ortnit und die Wolfdietriche nach Müllenhoffs Vorarbeiten*, ed. A. Amelung and O. Jänicke, I (1871), II (1873).

D is in the Alemannian dialect, and was written in northern Swabia immediately after 1280.

All these versions of the Wolddietrich-story are composed in a modified form of the Nibelungen strophe. They are not much affected by 'courtly' art, but have many of the special features of popular poetry.<sup>1</sup> These German versions were influenced by French epic poetry.<sup>2</sup> The Middle-High-German poem *Rother* adopted some motives from the Wolddietrich-story.

The main contents of this story (of which versions A and B concern us most) are as follows: Wolddietrich was the son of the Greek King Hugdietrich.<sup>3</sup> When a new-born infant he was found uninjured among a number of wolves,—hence his name. He grew up under the care of the old and faithful Berchtung von Meran. On the death of his father, the kingdom was divided among the king's sons; but Wolddietrich was at once repudiated by his brothers, who were unwilling to recognise him as their father's legitimate son, and his faithful followers were imprisoned. This was brought about, according to A, by the faithless Sabene. Woldietrich then set out for foreign lands and had many adventures, among others one with a mermaid. He killed a serpent which had caused King Ortnit's death, and married the latter's widow. Long afterwards he returned from his wanderings, freed his men, imprisoned his brothers, and recovered his kingdom.

<sup>1</sup> Cf., besides the edition, F. Vogt in Paul's *Grundriss*, and E. H. Meyer in *Ztsch. f. d. Alt.*, XXXVIII, 65-95.

<sup>2</sup> See Heinzel, *Ostgot. Heldensage*, pp. 77-82.

<sup>3</sup> Son of Trippell, according to C.

There were also Low-German poems, now lost, about this same hero. As I have elsewhere<sup>1</sup> pointed out, the Danish ballad of *Grulver* (Grundtvig, No. 29), i.e. *Grúlfr* or *Granuol*, i.e. *gránulf*, is based on a Low-German poem (presumably of the thirteenth century) which told how a serpent was killed by 'Graywolf' (i.e. Wolddietrich).

A church door, which cannot be older than 1180-1190, from Valþjófsstaðir in the eastern part of Iceland, has carvings which represent a knight conquering a dragon, and thereby freeing a lion. This knight is evidently Wolddietrich; for in the accompanying runic inscription he is designated as 'King of the Greeks.' This Icelandic story had also, doubtless, a North-German source. We have the same account in the *Þiðriks-saga*, which here follows a Low-German authority, and in a Danish ballad about Diedrich of Bern.

The Anglo-Saxons also knew the stories of the Frankish Theodoric, for in the poem *Widsið*, which refers to a great many heroic sagas, and contains reminiscences of events of the sixth century and earlier, we read (l. 24): 'Theodric ruled over the Franks.' Among those whom the minstrel visited at the court of Eormanric, he mentions (l. 115) Seafola and Theodric; but Seafola is certainly, as Müllenhoff has pointed out, the same person as the faithless Sabene in Wolddietrich A. The stories of this Theodoric, who corresponds to Wolddietrich, and of Seafola, must have come to the English from the Franks.

This saga of the West-Germanic Franks was also

<sup>1</sup> In *Arkiv for nord. Filol.*, xii, 1-29.

inherited by the French. Heinzel has proved<sup>1</sup> that a French *chanson de geste*, '*Parise la duchesse*,'<sup>2</sup> preserved in a MS. of the thirteenth century, shows great similarity to Wolfdietrich, not only in separate features and names, but also in the whole course of the story. In general, the French poem resembles most the German redaction A, as, for example, in the feature that the hero's mother is slandered and obliged to leave the land. In certain p. 74. features, however, the French poem is closer to B; we read, for example, in both that the child had a cross on the right shoulder.

It has not hitherto been noticed that the Frankish Wolfdietrich-story, doubtless in the form in which it was known by the English, also exerted some influence on an Irish story. I refer to the story of *Cormac's Birth*, preserved in the Book of Ballymote, an Irish MS. of the end of the fourteenth century.<sup>3</sup> The main features are as follows: King Art, son of Conn of the Hundred Battles, comes, the night before his death, to the house of the smith Olc Acha, and sleeps with Etan, the latter's daughter. He tells her that she shall bear him a son who shall become King of Ireland, and he instructs her how she is to act in regard to the child. In the morning he takes his leave, bidding her carry her

<sup>1</sup> *Über die ostgothische Heldensage*, pp. 68 f, 78.

<sup>2</sup> Ed. by Martonne, in 1836, and by Guessard and Larchey, in 1860; see Paulin Paris in *Hist. Litt.*, xxii, 659-667.

<sup>3</sup> This MS. has been published in facsimile. Ballymote lies in Sligo in Connaught. The tale is edited by Standish H. O'Grady in *Silva Gadelica Texts*, pp. 253-256; trans. pp. 286-289; cf. p. xi. Kuno Meyer (in *Rev. Celt.*, xiv, 332) gives a number of corrections based on a new examination of the MS. Whitley Stokes informs me that 'The Yellow Book of Lecan' contains a copy of the same piece.



son, whom she is to call Cormac, to his (Art's) friend Lugna in Corann in Connaught, to be brought up by him. That same day King Art falls, as he had foretold, in a battle against Lugaid mac Con.

When Etan feels that her time is at hand, she sets out to go to Lugna; but on the way gives birth to her child in a forest. Lugna hears a sound as of thunder in the air when Cormac is born. He then utters a poem on the child's coming greatness, saying: 'Now is born the son of the true prince, Cormac the son of Art,' and at once goes in search of him.

The mother falls asleep after being delivered. The maid who accompanies her also falls asleep, and a she-wolf then comes and bears the infant unnoticed to her  
 P. 75. cave. The mother laments when she wakes and does not find her child. Lugna soon comes to her, and she accompanies him home.

Lugna offers a reward to the finder of the babe. Grec mac Arod, wandering one day in the forest, comes upon the wolf's cave, and sees the little boy moving about on all-fours among the young wolves. He tells this to Lugna, who returns with him to the place and takes both the boy and the whelps. The child is brought up by Lugna, who calls him Cormac in accordance with Art's wish.

Once when Cormac was playing with Lugna's two sons, he strikes one of them, who thereupon taunts the young hero with not having a father. Much distressed, Cormac tells Lugna what he has heard. Lugna reveals to him his parentage, and adds that it was prophesied that he should become king. Cormac, with his  
 then makes his way to the royal residen-

He is accompanied by Lugna and by a body of men who have been in Corann because too heavy a fine has been laid upon them for a murder. In Tara, Cormac is received as a foster-son.

Some time after, King Lugaid mac Con pronounces an unjust judgment in a legal dispute. Cormac speaks out against this and proposes another decision which the whole people approve. They cry out: 'This is the true prince's son.' Mac Con is thereupon driven away, and Cormac is made king.

Cormac is a genuine Irish saga-king. He is said to have been born in the year 195 of our era, and to have reigned as High-King of Ireland from 227 to 266. He had the reputation of being one of the wisest of the ancient rulers of Ireland, and was famed as a judge and lawgiver.

The Book of Leinster, which was written before 1160, contains a story called *The Battle of Mag Mucrime*<sup>1</sup> (the battle in which King Art fell when fighting against Lugaid mac Con). Here we find the first part of the story of Cormac's Birth along with information as to Art's death. Yet Art's friend, at whose house his son is to be brought up, is merely described as one of the men of Connaught, neither his name nor that of his dwelling being given. The story also tells of Lugaid's unjust and Cormac's just judgment in Tara, which occasioned Cormac's call to the throne.

I take that part of the story which the tale of Cormac's

<sup>1</sup> Stokes in *Rev. Celt.*, XIII, 426-74; and by 18, transl. 347-59. On the places in other battle is described, see Stokes, p. 429.

Birth in the Book of Ballymote has retained from the older account of the Battle of Mag Mucrime (preserved, among other places, in the Book of Leinster) to be original Irish tradition. Zimmer has set forth the view<sup>1</sup> that it is a story from Munster and Leinster, and that, since it shows no connection with the saga-king Finn, it is somewhat older than the year 1000.

An Irish poem by Cinaed hua Artacain, who died in 975, mentions the death of Art and Lugaid mac Con, and the grave of Cormac, son of Art.<sup>2</sup>

In the story of Cormac's Birth (which is found in no MSS. that are earlier than the end of the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries) between the two original Irish sections which tell, the one of Art's death and what takes place directly before, the other of Cormac's appearance at Tara, a section is introduced describing Cormac's birth and his youth spent with Lugna. This section appears to me to be for the most part an imitation of some English poem on Wolf-Theodoric (Wolfdietrich), which poem the Anglo-Saxons must have got from the Franks.

The form of the Wolfdietrich-story which influenced the Irish tale must have agreed with the German version B in representing the hero's mother not as his father's queen, but as a young girl with whom he had secret intercourse. In German B 104-109, Hugdietrich talks  
p. 77. in the night with Hiltpurc, at whose side he is sleeping. He tells her that she shall give birth to a

<sup>1</sup> *Ztsch. f. d. Alt.*, xxxv, 8, 114 ff, 161; *Gött. Gel. Anz.*, 1891 (No. 5), p. 170.

<sup>2</sup> A text from about the year 1000 mentions 'The Adventures of Cormac, grandson of Conn,' among the well-known stories of Ireland. See Zimmer in *Ztsch. f. d. Alt.*, xxxv, 126 f.

child, decides what name the child shall have, and gives her further instruction as to how she shall act.<sup>1</sup> Next morning Hugdietrich departs (B 124 ff). The English redaction of the Wolfdietrich-story which influenced the Irish tale must have contained practically the same form of this motive as that in German B. The obvious similarity between the original Irish tale of Cormac and the Germanic story of Wolfdietrich in this striking feature was one of the reasons why the former came to be influenced by the latter. The same thing may be said of another point of resemblance between the two accounts: Hugdietrich on his deathbed confides Wolfdietrich to the faithful Berchtung (B 262, A 256), just as King Art before his death decides that his son Cormac is to be brought up at the house of his friend Lugna.

Let us now compare that section of the Irish tale which is essentially an imitation of the Germanic story of Wolfdietrich, with the various forms of the latter.

Cormac's mother makes her way after Art's death to the latter's true friend Lugna. In like manner Wolfdietrich's mother, in German A (278), betakes herself to Hugdietrich's faithful follower Berchtung. But there is a difference, in that Cormac's mother sets out in accordance with Art's instructions, and before her

<sup>1</sup> This motive, as well as several others in the stories of Wolfdietrich and Cormac's Birth, occurs elsewhere in popular poetry, as e.g. in the Norwegian ballad of *Hugaball* (Bugge, No. 5; Landstad, No. 18). Here the hero, when he acts roughly towards other boys, is taunted with the fact that he does not know who his father is. His mother then tells him his father's name. This ballad has also the motive in common with the Wfd.-story that the illegitimate hero must fight with his brothers, the legitimate sons of the king.



child is born, whereas Wolddietrich's mother, after her son is born, is forced by Hugdietrich's brothers to make her way to Berchtung. In one respect, the Irish p. 78. tale here agrees with the French poem, for in the latter Parise, exiled by her husband, sets out for a foreign land before her son is born.<sup>1</sup>

Cormac's mother gives birth to her son in a forest. Her maid breaks branches from the trees and lays them under her. In this feature the Irish story shows a close agreement with the French poem, in which Huguet is born out in the wood. When Parise cannot travel further, her companions make her a bed of branches and leaves.

In the Irish, a she-wolf finds the child and carries it to a cave surrounded by bushes, where her young are. So in German B (152-154) a wolf finds the child, carries it away to a high mountain in which there is a cave, and lays it down before its whelps. German A, which here is in general different, agrees, nevertheless, with the Irish in that the child is borne away while the mother sleeps. In both the Irish story and the German poem (A 121 ff, B 183 f) the mother is in despair over the child's disappearance. So in the French poem, where also the child is removed while the mother sleeps.

Cormac is found among the wolves, like Wolddietrich in B. In the Irish, the child is taken from the wolf's cave by a man who first saw it there when he was about in the forest, and by Lugna the true friend of

<sup>1</sup> In the Irish, Etan makes the journey in a carriage. When travail comes upon her she descends from the vehicle and gives birth to her son. This feature may be due to the name of the hero *Corbmac*, which in Cormac's Glossary (trans. p. 29) is explained as 'The son of a chariot.'

Cormac's father. According to B, Wolddietrich is found one day, when his mother's father is hunting, by one of the latter's hunters. In A, Berchtung carries the child away from the wolves to a hunter. Cormac is brought up by the faithful Lugna; Wolddietrich, according to A, by the devoted Berchtung. Both the Irish and the German accounts dwell on the young hero's beauty and strength. Both tell of his violence and of his striking other boys.

One of Lugna's sons taunts Cormac with having no father. In distress Cormac seeks his foster-father, who informs him who his real father was. In the French poem it is a knight who taunts the boy with having neither father nor mother. In A, Wolddietrich goes first to Berchtung and afterwards to his mother, and demands information as to his origin. He wishes to be no longer 'without a father.' His mother then tells him that he is the son of King Hugdietrich. So in the French poem it is the mother who reveals to the hero his parentage.

While Cormac is being brought up by Lugna, a usurper, Lugaid mac Con, reigns at Tara. While Wolddietrich is being cared for by Berchtung, he is, according to A, driven from the land of his inheritance.

After Cormac has learned his parentage, he sets out with his wolves, accompanied by Lugna, to the royal residence at Tara. He has also with him a body of warriors who have been in Corann because too severe a penalty had been imposed on them for a murder. These followers belong to the original Irish story of Cormac;<sup>1</sup> but when the latter was fused with the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. O'Curry, *The Manuscript Materials of Ancient Irish History*, p. 286.

German story, they were identified with Berchtung's sons, who help Wolddietrich to regain his inheritance.

The form of the Wolddietrich-saga which influenced the Cormac story agreed with B in one important point, viz. that it did not know of the untrue Sabene.

Both the French poem *Parise la duchesse* and the Irish tale of Cormac's Birth, taken in connection with the mention of Seafola in the Anglo-Saxon poem, prove that even among the Franks there existed quite different forms of the story of Wolddietrich, and that some of the most significant variations between the German poems A and B already existed in Frankish accounts.<sup>1</sup>

p. 80. It has not hitherto been recognised that the Helgi-poems in the Edda were influenced by the heroic saga of Wolf-Theodoric, or Wolddietrich. In what follows I shall try to prove that the beginning of the first Helgi-lay is an imitation of a lost A.S. poem on Wolf-Theodoric, which poem also, and at about the same time, influenced the Irish tale of Cormac's Birth.

The lay begins thus: 'It was early in the ages, when eagles were screaming, and holy waters streamed from the Mountains of Heaven, that Borghild gave birth to Helgi the stout-hearted in Brálund.'

'Holy waters' is (as we see from the *Grímnismál*, 29, where the same expression occurs) a heavy shower of rain which streams down during a thunderstorm. In the story of Cormac's Birth, which was here influenced by an English poem on Theodoric's birth, we read that

<sup>1</sup> Jänicke's opinion (*Wolfdiet.*, II, xl.) is different from mine. He thinks that the twelfth century minstrels introduced these variations in the story on their own responsibility.

when Cormac was born a noise as of thunder resounded through the air, and that Lugna uttered verses which begin 'Boom, thunder' (*Delm, Torann*), and end with the announcement of 'the son, to whom the sound of thunder is come.'<sup>1</sup>

That there was a terrible storm when Helgi was born agrees with a common feature in Irish tales. According to a story in the Book of Leinster (fol. 126a), the birth of the marvellous child Ái mac Olloman was preceded by a violent storm which terrified all in the house.

Helgi's mother is called *Borghildr*; Wolddietrich's (according to B) *Hiltpurc*. The Norse name is composed of the same two parts as the German. The change in the order of the two parts is explained by the fact that *Borghildr* was a usual Norse and Icelandic name, while the West-Scandinavians had no women's names in *-borg*, but only in *-björg*.<sup>2</sup>

At Helgi's birth Norns come and foretell that he shall become the most famous and best of princes. When p. 81. Cormac is born sounds are heard in the air, which

<sup>1</sup> *Mac . . . dian[d]rocht cor ndelma*. The MS. has *dianrocht*, not *diadrocht*. Whitley Stokes has kindly written me that he reads *diandrocht*, '*drocht* for *doroht*, *t*-pret. of *dorochini*.' *Cor. i. ceol*, O'Clery, 'music,' O'Reilly; cf. O'Curry, *Manners and Customs*, III, 407 f.

<sup>2</sup> There is another reason which may have had something to do with the changing of Hildburg into Borghild: the name Borghild, *i.e.* 'the Hild, or battle-maiden, dwelling in the castle,' may have been used to designate the woman as a contrast to the Hild in the story of the Hjadnings, who was carried off by force (cf. *Bekkhild* contrasted with *Brynhild* in the *Völs. saga*, chap. 23), and might at the same time seem to be a suitable name for the mother of Helgi, who is designated as one whose very race made him a real warrior-chieftain; cf. H. H., I, 6: *hvesir augu sem hildingar*, 'he has flashing eyes as warlike princes (the descendants of a true warlike race).'



predict the greatness of the new-born king's son, and even before his birth it is prophesied that he shall become king of Ireland. In A, Woldietrich's mother, before her child is born, hears a voice which bids her carry him to a certain hermit immediately after his birth. The hermit baptizes the boy, and says that the child shall later win a queen and a kingdom. That this motive of the Norns' coming is, however, more closely connected with another story, I shall point out in what follows.

The Norns predict that Helgi shall be accounted 'the best of the *Buthlungs*' (H. H., I, 2). In both the First and Second Lays he is called *buðlungr*.<sup>1</sup> Helgi the son of Hjörvarth is also called by the same name.<sup>2</sup> This has some connection with the fact that Woldietrich's mother, according to A, was a sister of *Botelunc von Hiunen*, who elsewhere corresponds to the *Buðli* of early Old Norse poems.

The Norns tied the threads of fate 'whilst castles were broken in Brálund' (*þá er borgir braut*, I, 3). The same night in which Helgi was born a battle took place, during which his father stormed hostile castles;<sup>3</sup> p. 82. for we are told that the morning after Helgi's birth his father came 'out of the tumult of battle' (*ór vlgþrimu*, I, 7) to give his son a name and rich gifts.

<sup>1</sup> H. H., I, 12; I, 56 (twice); II, 30; II, 44.

<sup>2</sup> The use of *buðlungr* in the *Ynglingatal* and later poems in the general meaning of 'king,' is less original, and is due to imitation of the Helgi-lays.

<sup>3</sup> The meaning of the expression *þá er borgir braut*, which has hitherto been misunderstood, is clear from *þá var . . . borg brotin*, Oddr., 18; *nam brjóta Vinda borgir*, Rekst., 3; *hæfði burg um brutna*, in Brate and Bugge, *Runverser*, Stockholm, 1891, no. 98, and other similar places.

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This motive was emphasised by the poet to show that Helgi belonged to a race of valiant warriors ; but it stands in connection with the story (in Wfd. A) that Hugdietrich was on a military expedition when Wolddietrich was born. In the Irish tale, a battle takes place the morning after Cormac is begotten, and in it his father falls.

The poet's statement that 'castles were broken' fits in well with the life of the Scandinavians in Britain, but would be remarkable if the poem had been composed in Greenland or Iceland.

There is an historical basis for the fight on the night of Helgi's birth. Theodoric, Wolddietrich's historical prototype, was born, according to Jordanes, on the very day on which a messenger came to the house of his father Thiudimer bearing from Thiudimer's brother Walamer the glad tidings of a victory over the Huns.

According to the Norse poem, the threads of fate for the new-born son of the king are fastened under the heavens. He is to have lands between east and west (*i.e.* from the farthest east to the remotest west), and the Norns say that the thread which hangs towards the north (*d norðrvega*) shall always hold fast. This seems to mean that Helgi's reputation shall always live in the North.<sup>1</sup> Similarly in the Irish verses, the coming greatness of the new-born Cormac is expressed in strong terms, which may be translated as follows : 'filius cui caelum eiusque collaudatio proderit.'<sup>2</sup>

It is in the night-time that Helgi is born and that the Norns decide his fate. This is related in the first four

<sup>1</sup> Or, that Helgi shall win a kingdom in the North, which never shall be wrested from him.

<sup>2</sup> *Mac dororba nem a chommdidim.*

strophes. The fifth strophe, the beginning of which has not hitherto been correctly understood, carries us on to the early morning, when day is breaking. I translate the passage thus: 'There was nothing for a  
 p. 83. harm to the descendant of the Wolfings<sup>1</sup> (i.e. nothing which harmed the new-born Helgi), who was born of the maiden as the fruit of love.<sup>2</sup> Quoth one raven to

<sup>1</sup> The connection demands this meaning. The author, who ends his poem by praising Helgi's victory and success, cannot here be referring to the hero's early death. Most probably we should read: *NEITT var at angri*. The pronoun *neitt* is not commonly used in Old Norse in the meaning 'nothing,' unless a negation precedes; but this use does occur, as I have shown (Sievers, *Beit.*, xxii, 124) in *Sigurðarkviða*, 52, 5. It is due to the influence of the A.S. *nān*. Both H. H., 1, and the *Sigurth-lay* were much influenced by the English. The ms. may have had *Eitt* for *Neitt*, as the ms. of *Beowulf* has in line 949 *ænigre for nænigra*. In *Neitt var at angri* | *Ylfinga nið* there is a crossing of the alliteration. Yet possibly the original expression was: *ETKE vas at angre*, either so that *et[a]*s did not form a syllable, or with a trisyllabic 'sinking'; see Sievers, *Metrik*, § 43, 5, b. That in this place there was originally a negative expression, is supported by the reading in H. Hj., 10, where *angr* alliterates with *ekki*, and that in H. H., 11, 46, where *angrlið* alliterates with *engi*. Egilsson tried to express the same meaning when he read: *Eitt var-at angri*.

<sup>2</sup> The ms. has the meaningless *ylfinga niþ er þeire meyo er munuþ fōddi*. The word *munuð* (not *munuð*, since that word is written in Háv. 79 *munuð*) cannot mean 'the loved child, darling,' or the mother's love to the child. I would read as follows:

*Ylfinga niþ  
 er þeire meyo  
 or munuþ fōddiz.*

*Ylfinga niðr* is here (as in 11, 8) *Helgi*. The word *fōddi* is a corruption of *fōddiz*, as e.g. *ver þa* (in U Vpá, 45) of *ver þas*. With *fōddisk þeiri meyo*, cf. *jarli þorinn, alinn dsum, Hildi var Hóðlfr um getinn*, Hyndl. 19, *fórk mér vel, hann virðisk monnum vel*, and the like. With *ör munuð fōddisk*, cf. *af munuð* (= *af hjúskap*) *byrjaðr, með munuð getinn*; *af munuð* may be used instead of *ör munuð*, just as one said both *deyja ör sárum* and *deyja af einhverju*.



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another, as he sat on the high tree without food: "I know something. Mail-clad stands the son of Sigmund, one night old;<sup>1</sup> now the day is come; he has flashing eyes like warlike princes; he is the friend of the wolves; we two shall be glad." p. 84.

When we see that the new-born Helgi is here called 'the descendant of the Wolfings who was born of the maiden as the fruit of love,' we perceive that the poet, unlike the author of the prose piece *On Sinfjötli's Death*, cannot have thought that Sigmund was married to Borghild when he got with her the child Helgi. He must, on the other hand, have supposed that Borghild was Sigmund's concubine, or else a young maiden whom he visited in secret. Light is thrown on this by *Wolfdietrich B*, where we read that Hugdietrich, clad as a woman, obtains admission to Hiltpurc's dwelling, and gets with her his son Wolfdietrich. Likewise in the Irish tale, Art sleeps with the unmarried girl Etan the night before his death, and gets with her his son Cormac. Wolfdietrich's historical prototype, Theodoric, was the son of his father's concubine.

Helgi is called 'the descendant of the Wolfings,' and the raven says, 'he is the friend of wolves' (*sá er varga vinr*). From the point of view of later Icelandic poetry this latter expression must be regarded as nothing but a poetic way of saying that Helgi is to become a valiant warrior, and give the wolves many

<sup>1</sup> It is not uncommon to read in popular stories of a hero born clad in armour (see *Danmarks gamle Folkeviser*, II, 645). The fact that Helgi is mail-clad may possibly be connected with what A says of Wolfdietrich, that when baptized by the hermit he got a silk shirt, which was to render him invulnerable, or with the statement in A 245, that Wolfdietrich's father set aside a suit of armour for him.



corpses to eat; it must be taken to mean no more than the expression *varghollr*, 'friendly towards the wolves,' which is used of a king in *Rekstefja*, 3. But when it is said of the new-born Helgi, who has not yet been in battle, that 'he is the wolves' friend,' I am of the opinion that this remark points to a saga-motive which the Norse poet knew from an English poem on Wolf-dietrich.

In B the child, immediately after birth, is found in the wolf-den among the whelps. According to A, the  
 p. 85. little child was laid in the bushes beside a well. In the night, when the moon is shining forth through the clouds, there come a pack of wolves with open mouths; but they do the child no harm. They lie down in a circle about him, their eyes shining as the light of candles. The child goes to each of them; he wishes to seize the light; and the wolves submit patiently. Thus the child goes about among them until morning, when they run away. In the Irish tale, the new-born Cormac creeps about on all-fours among the young wolves, who sport and play around him. Both he and the whelps are taken out of the cave. His wolves followed him to Tara, and Cormac always kept them with him, 'and the reason why Cormac was so much attached to wolves was that wolves had nourished him.' The Norse poet transferred to the new-born Helgi the motive that he was the friend of wolves; but he thought at the same time of the wolf as the animal of the battlefield, Odin's animal, who followed the valiant warrior. Therefore the raven said, 'he is the friend of the wolves,' the raven itself also being the animal of the battlefield, and the animal of Odin.

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This expression used of Helgi gives us, moreover, the right explanation of the statement, 'Nothing harmed the descendant of the Wolfings.' In Wfd. A, it is said repeatedly that the wolves, like all other animals, did the child no harm.<sup>1</sup> The words 'Nothing harmed the descendant of the Wolfings' imply, therefore, that the new-born child had been in the night among wolves (this may possibly have been described in a strophe since fallen out between four and five), but that in the morning it appeared that the child had suffered no harm: the new-born Helgi and the wolves were, on the contrary, good friends.

Let us now compare the words used of the young Helgi, 'he is the friend of the wolves,' with other statements in the poem. It will be seen that the poet brings wolves into close connection with his hero.

When the battle between Helgi and the sons of Hunding is about to begin, we read (I, 13), 'Odin's p. 86. dogs (*i.e.* wolves) go corpse-greedy (*i.e.* greedy for the bodies of fallen men) over the island.' 'Wild dogs' is a regular Irish expression for wolves. From the expression 'over the island,' it looks as if we must conclude either that the poet imagined the battle-place in a large island, or that the poem itself was composed on an island, since the battle is said to have taken place *at Logafjöllum*, 'at Flame-fells,' and these words hardly allow us to think of a small island.

After the combat, Helgi sat down under 'Eagle-

<sup>1</sup> In A 100, we have: *táten dem kinde niht*; in A 102, *die wolve dir tuont kein ungemach*; in A 105, *dirst der lēp vil unbenomen*; in A 106, *dir die argen wolve fride habent gegeben*; cf. A 111, A 113, A 210. M.H.G. *ungemach* has about the same meaning as O.N. *angr*.

Rock,' and while there he saw a splendid company of battle-maidens come riding through the air. Thereupon

*Frá arliga  
ör 'ulf íþi'  
döglingr, etc. (I, 16).*

'Early the king asked, out of the wolf-den, the southern women whether they would go home that night with the warriors.' We must understand the phrase in this passage as *ör ulfhíði*, 'out of the wolf-den.'<sup>1</sup> It is, indeed, hard to imagine Helgi, who had seated himself 'under Eagle-Rock,' and saw battle-maidens come riding through the air, at the same time within a wolf's den from which he speaks with the battle-maidens. It looks as if the Norse poet made use of this feature because he knew the story about Wolddietrich, who when but an infant had been in the den of wolves. He seems also to have imagined that Helgi as a grown-up hero still clung, like Cormac, to his wolves.

Wolves appear also in Helgi's last decisive battle, which, we may note, takes place 'at Wolf-stone' (*at Frekasteini*). The battle-maidens who protect Helgi come from the heavens. There Hothbrodd falls. Sigrún wishes Helgi good luck with his victory, whilst 'the steed of the witch ate of the grain of Hugin (Odin's raven)' (*át hálu skær af Hugins barri*), i.e. the wolves ate of the bodies of Helgi's enemies. This is not mere verbiage used to make more effective the description of the battle. It is a real part of the story.

<sup>1</sup> The author of the Vols.-saga gives the passage thus: *Ok er Helgi fór frá orrostu, þá fann hann við skóg einn konur.* I refrain from deciding whether he understood *ulf í þi* as *ulfhíði* or as *ulfvíði*, 'Wolf-wood.'

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With what we have just said of Helgi's relations p. 87. with the wolves, compare the covert words he is made to utter in the first strophe of the Second Lay on leaving the dwelling of his enemy, where he has not been recognised: 'Ye had the grey Wolf (*úlf grán*) within.' In like manner, Wolfdietrich called himself *der Wolf*, in Wfd. B 369; and in B 175, 859, *Wolf* is said to be his second name. In the Danish ballad,<sup>1</sup> moreover, Wolfdietrich is called *Gralver*, 'Grey-Wolf.' Observe further that Helgi is regularly called the descendant of the Wolfings (*Ylfinga niðr*),<sup>2</sup> not only in the First but also in the Second Lay (I, 5; II, 8, and II, 47), and that he and his men are called *Wolfings*.<sup>3</sup> This race-name I shall discuss more fully in my investigation of the Völsung-stories.

One raven says to the other, concerning the birth of the king's son: 'We two shall be glad.' In the Irish verses which tell of Cormac's birth, we read: 'It is thy birth, O great son! which is announced by heaven, gladness, joy.'<sup>4</sup> The German poem tells of Hugdietrich's joy when the message was brought him that his son was born, and again when he saw him (A 36, 37). The account of Wolfdietrich's birth has its historical prototype in the story of the birth of the East-Gothic

<sup>1</sup> Grundtvig, *Danm. gl. Folkeviser*, No. 29; see my discussion in *Arkiv f. nord. Filol.*, XII, 1 ff.

<sup>2</sup> One might be disposed to translate 'the ancestor of the Wolfings,' just as Odin in *Ynglingatal* is called *Asa niðr*. I have translated it by 'descendant,' because Helgi's father Sigmund was said to have gone about as a wolf.

<sup>3</sup> H. H., I, 34, and 39. In the prose introduction to H. H., II, we read: 'King Sigmund and the men of his race were called Völsungs and Wolfings.'

<sup>4</sup> In Irish: *is do gein a meic móir adfet nem fdiille suba.*



Theodoric, of which Jordanes writes as follows: *Eo mox die nuntius veniens felicior in domo Thiudimer repperit gaudium. ipso si quidem die Theodoricus eius filius, quamvis de Erelieva concubina, bonae tamen spei puerolus natus erat.*<sup>1</sup> The Norse poet makes more prominent the fact that the new-born son of the king is to be a warlike hero, and therefore puts the expression of joy at his birth into the mouth of the raven.<sup>2</sup>

In H. H., I, 7, we read: 'He (Helgi) seemed to the courtiers to be of the race of a king (literally, of the race of Dag)': *drótt þótti sá döglingr vera*. As to Cormac, his father's friend says directly after his birth that he is the true king's son. He repeats the same statement just before the boy Cormac makes his way to Tara; and this is the cry of all the people when Cormac first speaks in an assembly there.

It is said of Helgi in I, 7, 'they said that good times had come among men' (viz. with him): '*kvaðu með gunnum góð ár komin*.'<sup>3</sup> When Cormac was born, his father's friend sang: 'A king's birth; increase of grain . . . grain and milk shall be a result of Art's visit to Olc's house,' and in different stories we learn of the good times which the people enjoyed under Cormac's rule: the water was full of fish, and the forest of

<sup>1</sup> Jordanes, *Getica*, ed. Mommsen, chap. LII, pp. 127.

<sup>2</sup> In the popular poetry of many nations birds predict the fate of new-born children. In a Serbian ballad, e.g., two pigeons converse together at a child's birth, and in their conversation they predict its fate. See *Nord. Tidskr. f. Filol.*, New Series, III, 129; cf. 131. It is, of course, not necessary to suppose historical connection between the Irish tale and the Helgi-lay in this particular feature.

<sup>3</sup> I now prefer this reading; yet *góðár kominn* does not seem to offend against the metre. See Sievers, *Altgerm. Metrik*, § 37, 3.

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acorns. Wild game was abundant, and from the heavens streamed honey. In the Norse poem, the statement that Helgi's birth was to bring good times is somewhat idle, since we nowhere learn that such happy days really came.<sup>1</sup> This inconsistency is readily p. 89. explained by the theory that the poet, in his treatment of Helgi's birth and youth, took motives from the story which influenced the tale of Cormac's Birth, while the Helgi-lay as a whole was not based on this latter account.

The Helgi-poet continues (I, 7): 'The king himself went out of the tumult of battle to bring the young prince magnificent gifts.' In the following strophe we hear that the king gave his son the name Helgi, several different places, the names of which are given, and a splendid sword. In the Irish tale, King Art decides before his death what name his child is to have, and tells the boy's mother that her son shall become king of Ireland. According to another Irish MS.,<sup>2</sup> Art gives his son's mother (of course, for the son) *his sword*, his golden ring, and his state-dress. The supposition that the Helgi-poet took this motive of a father's giving his new-born son a sword from an A.S. poem on Wolf-Theodoric, is supported by the fact that Hugdietrich,

<sup>1</sup> Yet in the Lay of Hrímgærth (H. Hj., 28) we read of the company of valkyries, at whose head rode Sváfa, the betrothed of Helgi, the son of Hjórvarth: 'Their steeds shook themselves; from their manes fell dew in the deep dales, hail on the high trees; from that come good years among men.' It was a common belief among the old Irishmen that when a king was worthy of his high position good years were enjoyed by his people. See *The Battle of Magh Rath*, ed. O'Donovan, and accompanying notes. The same belief occurs in the story of the O.N. king Hákon Hákonsson, and elsewhere.

<sup>2</sup> *Rev. Celt.*, XIII, 455, note 2.

according to A 245, says before his death that he has kept a coat of armour and a sword for his son Woldietrich.

I have already shown (pp. 13 ff, above) that *láv*, H. H., I, 7, used of the gifts which the father presents his son, was doubtless borrowed from *lác* in an English poem. We see now that in all probability that poem was one which had Wolf-Theodoric for its hero. As Helgi's father, when he gives his son a name, gives him also different places which are enumerated in the poem (I, 8), so Hugdietrich, who also (according to German B) decides upon his unborn son's name, presents to his sons before his death certain places which are expressly mentioned. To Woldietrich he says: *Kunstnópel sol wesen dín*. The O.N. poet, however, introduced new names, most of which presuppose the conception of Helgi as a Danish king.

p. 90. If we combine the prose passage On Sinfjötli's Death with what is related in the Helgi-lay, we must conclude that the father Sigmund was still alive after all the events in the First Lay took place. But one gets a different impression from the poem itself. After the bestowal of the name and the gifts, Sigmund is not mentioned. The next strophe relates how Helgi grew up among his friends, just as if his father were dead. And there is, moreover, no mention of Sigmund in the following strophe, where we learn that Helgi, when fifteen years of age, killed Hunding, who had ruled long over the lands and people. The Lay seems therefore to indicate that Helgi's father was dead before the boy was grown up. We may suppose that Hunding killed Sigmund, and then took it upon himself to rule

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the kingdom. He occupied the throne until slain by Helgi, who thus avenged his father's death.

This remarkable disappearance of Sigmund from the poem after he has given a name to his son, is evidently to be explained by the fact that the Helgi-story, as we know it from the Edda, is made up of different component parts. We can here trace their joining. In the prose *On Sinfjötli's Death*, Sigmund is represented as living long after Helgi's birth. This seems to be due to a combination of saga-material; Sigmund was also the father of Sigurth Fáfnisbani, and Helgi was thought to be Sigurth's elder brother, and to have died before him. The author of the First Helgi-lay, however, followed the story of Wolf-Theodoric, in which the hero's father dies when the boy is in his infancy. As we have seen, Cormac's father dies before his son's birth. This motive was not borrowed from the Wolf-dietrich-story, but was in the original Irish tale.

We read of Helgi in I, 9: 'Then grew up before his friends' breast (*i.e.* in the midst of his friends) the noble elm, *radiant with gladness* (*ynðis ljóma*).' It is said of Cormac that he grew up at the house of his father's friend, and the passage runs: 'The lad verily was a pasture of the eyes of many,' and all good qualities were ascribed to him. In the lay sung after Cormac's birth, he is called the 'manchild of splendour.'<sup>1</sup>

When Helgi was fifteen years old, he slew Hunding, who had ruled long over land and people (I, 10).

<sup>1</sup> This is Whitley Stokes's translation. The MS. has *fermac náne* (not as in O'Grady, *formac náine*). Mr. Stokes remarks: 'I take the first *n* in *n-dne* to be a scribe's mistake.'

Cormac's father fell the morning after he had begotten Cormac, in a battle against a certain Mac Con, or properly Lugaid (Lugid) surnamed mac Con. This Mac Con thereupon became king in Tara, where he ruled until Cormac came thither in early manhood. Then the people, recognising from Cormac's wise aspect and just judgment that he was the true son of the king, drove away Mac Con and made Cormac king in his stead.

*Mac Con* means *Hound's son*. This corresponds exactly to *Hunding*, for while the derivative ending *-ing* in historical Old Norse means 'the descendant of,' the same ending *-ing* in A.S. means 'the son of.'<sup>1</sup>

It is certain that the name Mac Con was in the Irish story before the latter borrowed anything from the Germanic story of Wolf-Theodoric. I am of the opinion that Wolf-Theodoric's enemy in an A.S. poem was called Hunding. This opinion is strengthened by the fact that *Hundingum* (dat. pl.) occurs in the A.S. poem *Widsið*, v. 23 and 81 (in v. 23, directly before the Frankish hero Theodoric).

The agreement in meaning between *Hunding* and *Mac Con* was doubtless the chief reason why the Cormac story borrowed features from the story of Wolf-Theodoric.

Helgi and the sons of Hunding challenge one another  
p. 92. to do battle; then, as we read in the First Lay (st. 13):

*sleit Fróða frið  
fjánda á milli.*

<sup>1</sup> In Icelandic sagas, *Hundi* and *Hvelpr* occur as translations of the Gaelic name *Cuilen*, which, as an appellative, means 'whelp.' See Munch, *Norske Folks Historie*, I, b, 134, note 2.



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'The peace of Fróthi was broken between the enemies.' An Irish record in the same MS.<sup>1</sup> as that which contains the tale of Cormac's Birth, says of Cormac's rule: 'There was peace and quiet and happiness. There was neither murder nor robbery in that time.' And in a somewhat later MS.<sup>2</sup> we read of Cormac: 'He made Ireland into a Land of Promise; for there was there in his time neither theft nor robbery nor violence.'<sup>3</sup> Now, the 'peace of Fróthi' is described in Old Norse saga as follows: 'No man did any other man harm at that time, even if he met his father's or his brother's murderer; at that time there was no thief nor robber either.' It seems to me probable, therefore, that the author of the Helgi-lay used the expression, the 'peace of Frothi,' because the foreign story, which he was imitating, ascribed to its hero a similarly peaceful reign.<sup>4</sup>

So far, then, as I have been able to trace it, it is only the beginning of the First Helgi-lay—up to and including the account of Helgi's fight with Hunding—which shows the influence of a story about a saga-hero corresponding to Wolfdietrich. This story had points

<sup>1</sup> *The Tale of the Ordeals*, ed. with trans. by Stokes in *Irische Texte*, III, 185 and 203, after the Book of Ballymote.

<sup>2</sup> *The Panegyric of King Cormac*, ed. O'Grady in *Silva Gadelica Texts*, p. 89 f, trans., p. 96 f, after MS. Egerton 1782, in the British Museum, written at different times from 1419 to 1517.

<sup>3</sup> For similar stories cf. Joh. Steenstrup, *Normannerne*, I, 342-49; III, 154; Olrik, *Saksnes Oldhistorie*, II, 212; Lappenberg's note I in Pertz, *Mon. Germ., Scriptores*, XVI, 395.

<sup>4</sup> In what follows I shall try to prove also that there is a weak bond of connection, only partly traceable, between the First Helgi-lay and the Wolfdietrich-story as regards Helgi's relations with the battle-maiden Sigrún.

p. 93. of agreement with both German accounts of Wolf-dietrich, sometimes with A, sometimes with B, and with the Irish tale of Cormac's Birth. The motive of the thunderstorm at Helgi's birth, and the name Hunding, show particular agreement with the last-named story.

Apparently, therefore, the only explanation of the relation of the Old Norse lay to the stories of Wolf-dietrich in other languages, lies in the supposition that the former was influenced by an Anglo-Saxon heroic poem, which in its turn was a working-over of some Frankish epic.

From this we may infer that the author of the First Helgi-lay lived in a circle where Englishmen, Irishmen, and Norsemen associated with one another, and where he became familiar with both English and Irish stories. This discussion of the relations between the Helgi-lay and the Wolddietrich-story leads us, therefore, to the same results as to the personal and literary position of the Norse poet at which I have already arrived by means of other combinations.

Unlike the older extant verses on Helgi Hundingsbani, the author of the First Lay dwells at length on the hero's birth and on the events which immediately follow it. In this he doubtless took as a model the A.S. poem on Wolf-Theodoric. The Irish tale which was influenced by this same poem, is not, however, an isolated example in Irish literature of a poet's emphasising the birth of his hero. It is, on the contrary, but one example of an oft-recurring class of tales which formed a part of the repertory of every Irish storyteller—namely, that class which consists of stories

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about a certain person's birth (*genemain*, also *compeirt*, literally : how a person was begotten).

While Icelandic sagas, in agreement with Irish tales and Celtic stories in general, usually describe the birth and early boyhood of their heroes, mediæval Danish stories, as Axel Olrik remarks,<sup>1</sup> which develop in accordance with traditional tales and prefer to recount separate disconnected episodes, show reluctance to describe the youth of their chief personages. Starkath, for example, was really an East-Scandinavian hero ; but the stories of his birth and early youth arose later and in West Scandinavia. p. 94

I would, however, make one reservation as regards the relation between the account of Helgi's birth and the Wolfdietrich-story. In what follows I shall try to prove that the author of the First Helgi-lay in its present form was not the first Norse poet who transferred saga features from Wolf-Theodoric to Helgi, and that not merely Norse but also Danish poets in Britain have had to do with the development of the Helgi-lays. Therefore, although I believe that the description of Helgi's birth belongs in its essentials to the Norwegian poet who was the author of the whole lay, yet I dare not deny the possibility that the poet in this description may have relied on some older Scandinavian (Danish or Norwegian) poem in which Helgi was already identified with Wolfdietrich.

The striking contrast in poetic merit between the two poor strophes on Helgi's fight with Hunding and Hunding's sons, and the splendid stanzas which begin

<sup>1</sup> *Saksas Oldhistorie*, I, 15-18 ; II, 148. 'The stories which are certainly Danish are silent as regards the childhood of the kings,' I, 72.



the poem, might in that way be more easily explained. These opening strophes form a very vivid and effective picture. Day is breaking. Thunder-clouds recede in the distance. Rain-drops sparkle in the morning light. The radiant prince, but one night old, yet with the flashing eyes of a hero and birnie-clad, is the central figure. Above him hover the Norns, who have tied for him the golden threads of fate to the corners of the heavens. By his side is his young mother. The ravens in the tree near by greet the dawn and the new-born warrior who is to bring them food. Wolves play (so it is hinted) about the child. Around him stand faithful followers, who hail with rejoicing the offspring of an heroic race. In the background we catch a glimpse

p. 95. of surging hosts of warriors in the tumult of battle, while from the midst of them emerges the old hero Sigmund, to gaze for the first time on his infant son. In his hand he bears a sword—a gift for the new-born babe, who has already been heralded as a famous warrior, destined to reign in his father's stead.

## VIII

THE RELATION OF THE FIRST HELGI-LAY TO THE  
STORY OF MELEAGER.

WE have seen that the account of Helgi's birth and of the predictions of his future greatness, given in the First Helgi-lay, arose under the influence of an A.S. heroic poem (now lost) on Wolf-Theodoric, or Wolf-dietrich. Still, other foreign narratives seem to have affected this part of the poem.

The Norns come to the king's court when Helgi is born, and decide the hero's fate. This poetic-mythic feature appears here, as part of an heroic story, for the first time in the North.<sup>1</sup> It was, however, already known in classical heroic story. The account in the First Helgi-lay resembles very closely a part of the story of Meleager as told by Hyginus<sup>2</sup>: *Cum Althaea Thestii filia una nocte concubuerunt Oeneus et Mars; ex quibus cum esset natus Meleager, subito in regia apparuerunt Parcae. Cui fata ita cecinerunt: Clotho dixit eum generosum futurum, Lachesis fortem.* With this we may compare H. H., I, 1-2: 'Borghild had given birth to Helgi the stout-hearted in Brálund. It was night in the court. The Norns came, those who p. 96. decided the fate of the prince. They said that he should become the most famous of princes, and be regarded as the best of the Buthlungs.'

The two passages resemble each other even in details. O.N. *í boe*, 'in the court,' corresponds to *in regia*; O.N. *nornir kvámu to parcae apparuerunt*; O.N. *þær er øðlingi aldr um skópu*, 'those who decided the fate of the prince,' in connection with the following *báðu*, 'they bade (said),' to *cui fata ita cecinerunt*. The O.N. poem has, like the Latin, two adjectives: *fortem* could be taken to correspond in meaning to Helgi's surname *enn hugum-stóra*, 'the courageous'; *generosum*, 'noble,' resembles *bestan* in meaning. O.N. *báðu . . . verða*, 'said that he should become,' corresponds to *dixit eum . . . futurum*.

<sup>1</sup> The sibyl (*völva*) in her prophecy (Vpá, 23) indicates *Urðr*, *Verðandi* and *Skuld* as those who decide the fates of men in general, and in *Fáfnismál* (12, 13) the Norns are said to come to women in travail to deliver them.

<sup>2</sup> *Hygini Fabulae*, ed. M. Schmidt, p. 27.

I have tried to prove that the author of the First Helgi-lay lived in Ireland, probably at the court of the Scandinavian king of Dublin; that he understood Irish, and not only associated with Irish poets, but also borrowed poetic motives from them. We know with certainty that the Irish were acquainted with several of the Latin collections of classical, mythic, and heroic tales made partly in the early Middle Ages. It would not, therefore, have been remarkable if the author of our lay heard Irish poets tell orally the story of Meleager, possibly in part as it was to be found in Hyginus, and if he reproduced the mythical Parcae in the Norns who visit the new-born Helgi.

An historical investigation of the Norns and of their general relations to the *Fées* of Romance nations, the *Parcae* of the Romans, the *Moirai* of the Greeks, would lead us too far at this time. But in this connection I must point out the resemblance in expression (to which Dr. H. Falk has called my attention) between H. H., I, 3: *Sneru þær af afli þrlog . . . þáttu*, 'They turned with strength the threads of fate,' and Ovid, *Metam.*, VIII, 453: *staminaque impresso fatalia pollice nentes* of the Parcae, *triplices sorores*, in the story of Meleager's Birth; and I should like also to explain the expression which is used of the Norn in H. H., I, 4, viz. *nipt Nera*, 'Neri's (female) relative.'<sup>1</sup> This name *Neri* has the same meaning as *Norvi*. According to the *Gylfaginning*,<sup>2</sup> the father of Night was the giant *Norvi* or *Narfi*.<sup>3</sup> In *Vafþrúðnismál*, 25, and *Alvíssmál*, 29, he is called in

<sup>1</sup> I have given up an earlier conjecture, that *nera* might be = *neðra*.

<sup>2</sup> Chapter 10, *Snorra Edda*, I, 54.

<sup>3</sup> The Uppsala-Edda writes *norri*.

the dative *Norvi*, for which we must postulate a nom. *Norr*. *Neri* arose from \**Norvi*, as *gera*, 'to do,' 'make,' from *gørva*. The name is to be explained from an adjective \**norr*. In Norse, \**norr* meant 'narrow,' like the corresponding A.S. *nearu*.<sup>1</sup> The form *Neri*, \**Norvi* by the side of *Nari*, *Narvi*, *Norvi*, is to be explained by the primitive Germanic declension of the adjective, like the declension of *u*-stems in Gothic: nom. \**narwuz*, from which \**norr*; definite form, \**narwija*, from which \**norvi*.<sup>2</sup>

The name of Night's father (who is thought of as dark like her), *Norr* or *Narvi*, could thus mean 'the narrow,' and could be explained by the fact that *nearu*, *naru* in A.S. and O.S. poems is an epithet applied to night on account of its oppressive darkness, and also to hell. This *nearu*, *naru* is usually interpreted as 'narrow, oppressive.'<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> There is a trace of the adjective, e.g. in mod. Icel. *nirfill*, a miser, and in many names of places, in the elucidation of which Prof. O. Rygh has been good enough to help me: *Nørva-sund* (in the ms. also *norva*-, *niorva*-, *naurfa*-), the straits of Gibraltar; *Nyrvi*, the small island in Søndmør, in Western Norway, on which the town of Aalesund now lies; \**Ågr*, now Naaren, a little and rather narrow island on the inside of Ytre Sulen in Nordre Bergenhus Amt; *Njerne*, a country-place in Søndre Undal, Lister and Mandals Amt, on the narrow Spangereid in S.W. Norway. E. H. Meyer '*Die Eddische Kosmogonie*, p. 104), has explained *Narvi* as a loan-word from A.S. *nearu*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *þykk*—*þjukkr*, *gørr*—*gyrr*, *kyrr*—Old 'Gutnisk' (language spoken in island Gotland) *qver*, etc.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *nearo nihtwaco*, *nihtes nearwe*, etc.; see Grein's Glossary. In the newly-discovered O.S. Genesis-fragments, 286, we have *narouua naht*. This has already been pointed out by E. H. Meyer, and by Golther (*Handbuch d. germ. Myth.*, p. 522). Kögel (*Gesch. d. deut. Lit.*, 'Ergänzungsheft' to vol. I, pp. 12 ff) finds in *narouua naht* a stem *narwa*-, 'dark,' which is, he thinks, different from *narwa*-, 'narrow.'

But E. H. Meyer and Golther have pointed out, what I myself had previously noticed, that the pedigree of Night in Snorri's Edda is based on the Greek and Roman cosmogonic genealogies, such as occur earliest in Hesiod. These classical pedigrees were, I suppose, known in Britain from some Latin work, and it was doubtless in Britain that the Norsemen became familiar with them.

- p. 98. The third son of *Nótt*, 'Night,' is called *Dagr*, 'Day,' just as *Dies* (*Hemera*) was born of *Nox* (*Nyx*). The first son of Night is *Auðr*,<sup>1</sup> 'desolate.' This name is a Norse adaptation of *Aether*, who was the son of *Nox*. The Norsemen must have heard *Aether* in Britain and have changed it into *Auðr*, knowing that the A.S. *ēðe*, 'desolate,' corresponded to *auðr* in Old Norse. Night is married a second time to *Anarr* or *Ónarr*,<sup>2</sup> and has with him the daughter *Jörð*, 'earth.' In the genealogies of the classical cosmogonies we find *Terra*, 'earth' (*Tellus*, *Ge*) and Love, *Amor* (*Eros*).<sup>3</sup> *Jörð* is here a translation of *Terra*, and as for *Anarr* or *Ónarr*, in which the Norsemen doubtless thought of *án*

<sup>1</sup> Gen. *Auðs*, in a verse by Hallfreth in Snorri's Edda.

<sup>2</sup> *Anars* in full-rhyme with *hánum*, Thjóthólf in Fms., vi, 140. *Ónars* in full-rhyme with *gróna*, Hallfreth in Sn. Edda, i, 320 (wrongly *annars-granna* in MS. 757, *anas-græna* in U); *Ónars* in full-rhyme with *grónu*. Guthorm Sindri in *Hákonar saga góða*, *Heimsk.* (chap. 9, ed. F. Jónsson). In Sn. Ed., i, 54, W has *anarr*, U *onarr*, r alone incorrectly *annarr*. E. H. Meyer is wrong in holding to this form.

<sup>3</sup> The following passage is taken from a book, 'On the Nature of the Gods,' written in Greek by Cornutus (born ca. 20, †68 A.D.) as given in a modern Latin translation: *Phornuti speculatio de Natura Deorum, Jodoco Velareo interprete*, Ed. Lugd., 1608, p. 158: 'Proinde fabulati sunt *Chaos* esse genitum, quemadmodum describit Hesiodus. Post hoc *Terram* et *Tartarum* et *Amorem*, at ex *Chao Erebum* et *Noctem* produisse, vel ex *Nocte Aethera* et *Diem*.' Cf. p. 158 a.

or *ón*, 'without,' I agree with Golther that it is an altered form of *Amor*.<sup>1</sup>

The giant *Nǫrvi*, who is father of Night (called in A.S. *nearu*), and black and gloomy like his daughter, is, as E. H. Meyer has already observed, a modification of *Erebus*, who is named in Cornutus directly before black Night, and who, like her, came from Chaos (the p. 99. Scandinavian *Ginnungagap*).

But if *Nǫrvi* is *Erebus*, then the Helgi-poet's designation of the Norn, who comes in the night, as *nipt Nera*, i.e. 'the female relative of Neri (*Nǫrvi*),' must also have had its origin in the cosmogonic genealogies of the classics. In Hyginus<sup>2</sup> the three Parcae are said to be the daughters of *Nox* and *Erebus*. The author of the Helgi-lay must have become acquainted with this genealogy in one of the British Isles.<sup>3</sup>

The theory that there is historical connection be-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *mesopotamia*, Gislason, *Prøver*, p. 409; *epineus* for *Opimius*, *Prøver*, p. 118. As regards the ending, cf. Old Irish *pudar* from Lat. *putor*, Old Irish *sdupar* from Lat. *stupor*. I had written down the explanation of *Anarr* as *Amor* several years before I read the same in Golther, *Handbuch*, p. 523.

<sup>2</sup> In the beginning of *Hygini Fabulae*. He names *Fatum* among the children of *Nox* and *Erebus*.

<sup>3</sup> The goddess Hel is called *nipt Nara*, 'Nari's sister,' in Egil's *Höfuðlausn*, 10; *jóðis sílfs ok Narfa*, 'the sister of the wolf and Narfi,' in *Ynglingatal*, 12. In Snorri's Edda (cf. the prose piece after the *Lokasenna*) Nari or Narfi is said to be the son of Loki, whose daughter is Hel. This connection also between Hel and Nari or Narfi is probably due to genealogies in the classical cosmogonies. Hyginus has: *Ex Nocte et Erebo: Fatum, Mors*.



tween the Norns in the Helgi-lay and the Parcae in the Meleager-story<sup>1</sup> is supported, in the first place, by the fact that the author of the Norse poem knew also, as I shall point out in my discussion of the Hrímgæth-lay, another mythical Greek tale, in Latin form, just as he knew the Irish version of the Destruction of Troy; and in the second place, by the fact that the incidents of the coming of the fate-maidens to the new-born child and their predictions as to his future, passed from the Meleager-story by many different ways into popular  
p. 100. tales.<sup>2</sup> It is to be noted particularly that this motive was attached in the Middle Ages to other persons among West-European peoples, partly through the influence of Celtic works.

In the French romance *Amadas* of the thirteenth century, which, according to Gaston Paris,<sup>3</sup> is of Breton origin, three prophetic sisters appear at a child's birth and decide its fate.

In the fourteenth century French poem of *Ogier le Danois*, which was influenced by the Arthur-romances, *fées* come to Ogier at his birth. *Ogier* here shows special likeness to the Meleager-story in that the *fée* Morgue presents the child with a sword, decreeing that his life shall last as long as the blade is not corroded. This coming of the *fées* is not found in the older poems on Ogier. It appears, however, again in the prose story

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Golther, *Handbuch der German. Mythol.*, pp. 106 f.

<sup>2</sup> For example, in Modern Greek tales. See B. Schmidt, *Griechische Märchen*, No. 3 (p. 68) and No. 5 (pp. 74 f); cf. B. Schmidt, *Das Volksleben der Neugriechen*, 1, p. 211 f (communicated by Prof. Moltke Moe).

<sup>3</sup> *La Litt. franç. au moyen âge*, 2nd ed., § 66.

of that hero which dates from the beginning of the fifteenth century.<sup>1</sup>

The most interesting occurrence of this incident in Old French is in the fourteenth century romance of *Brun de la Montaigne*.<sup>2</sup> There we read that, in accordance with a time-honoured Breton custom, Butor has his young son borne to the fountain of marvels in the forest of Broceliande. That night many *fées* assembled at the fountain. Their three leaders pondered long over the future of the child. The first gave him beauty and grace, and decreed that he should be conqueror in tourneys and battles. The second, however, thought this liberality too great, and as an offset decreed that he should have pain and sorrow in love. The third, conceiving a very strong attachment for the child, promised to aid him whenever he was in need of help. She wrapped him up in silk clothes and put a gold ring on his finger. Then all vanished, for it was nigh cock-crow.

The son of Maillefer<sup>3</sup> also was visited by *fées* at his birth. After having partaken of a repast prepared specially for them, they dispensed gifts to the child. The first decreed that he should be valiant and hand-

<sup>1</sup> Vigfusson (*Corp. Poet. Bor.*, 1, cxxx) compares a number of features in the Helgi-story and in that of Holger (Ogier) the Dane; but only two of his parallels deserve any attention: (1) the *fées* at the birth of Ogier (just discussed), and (2) the rescue of Ogier by a *fée* in a terrible storm at sea. These motives do not belong to the oldest story of Ogier, and cannot therefore be regarded as 'echoes of the old Helgi myth.'

<sup>2</sup> Ed. Paul Meyer (*Soc. des anc. textes français*), Paris, 1875.

<sup>3</sup> See *Le Roman de Guillaume au Court Nez* in Le Roux de Lincy, *Livre des Légendes*, Paris, 1836, p. 257. On the whole matter concerning *fées* see particularly Alfred Maury, *Les fées du moyen âge*, Paris, 1843; Hertz, *Spielmannsbuch, Die Bretonischen Feen*.



some, govern Constantinople, be King of Greece, and convert the Venetians. No animal should have power to poison him. The other two also gave him similar good gifts, and all disappeared at dawn.

In the romance of *Huon de Bordeaux*,<sup>1</sup> finished in 1454 and printed before 1516, we read that Oberon received marvellous gifts at his birth from the *fées* invited to his christening, but that a wicked *fée*, who was not invited, decreed that he should not grow after his third year.

In *Ysaie le Triste*<sup>2</sup> also, *fées* appear in the night beside the new-born child and give it good gifts.

In *Perceforest*, a French romance of the fourteenth century, Lucina, Themis, and Venus visit a girl at her birth.

p. 101. We have a similar incident in the Icelandic tale of *Mærböll*,<sup>3</sup> preserved in a MS. of ca. 1700. Three sisters 'blákápur' are invited to the baptism of a new-born girl. The eldest two give good gifts; but the youngest, who had been treated with less consideration, lays a curse on the child.

Professor Moltke Moe calls my attention to a related Norwegian tale, *Trollnøstet*, 'the witch's claw,' taken down by Jørgen Moe in Bygland, in S.W. Norway. This points even more distinctly to the Meleager-story. A strange woman comes to the cradle of a queen's child, and says: 'Yes, handsome art thou; but yet

<sup>1</sup> See Dunlop-Liebrecht, *Gesch. des Prosaromans*, p. 124 a; cf. p. 89 b. On this romance cf. F. Wolf in *Denkschriften der Wiener Akad.*, VIII, 198.

<sup>2</sup> Dunlop-Liebrecht, pp. 86, 90.

<sup>3</sup> In Jón Árnason, *Isl. þjóðsögur*, II, 424 ff; Maurer, *Isl. Volkssagen*, pp. 284 f.

shalt thou become an adulterer and murderer, and shalt be sentenced to death. And thy mother shall not live after this candle is burnt out.' The queen arouses the nurse, and bids her extinguish the candle, which is afterwards preserved. The prophecy, nevertheless, was fulfilled.

In Germany also we have early evidence of the belief under discussion. To Professor Moltke Moe I owe the two following references. In Hartmann von Aue's *Erec* (v. 9900), written at the end of the twelfth century, Frau Sælde (Good Luck) comes to the cradle of the new-born child, and gives it gifts. In the confessional of Burchard of Worms († 1025), the question is asked: 'Do you believe, as some do, that those whom people call Parcae, still exist? . . . That, when a child is born, they decide what shall happen to him.'

In Scandinavia the story of Meleager's birth influenced, as is well known, the *Nornagest* (him to whom the Norns came).

Saxo tells (Bk. VI, p. 272, ed. Müller) that it was the custom in olden times to question the Norns (*Parcae*) as to a child's fate. Thus Fridleif (Fridleuus) acted when he wished to know the destiny of his son Ólaf (Olauus). The first Norn gave the boy beauty and favour among men; the second, liberality; but the third, who was malicious, decreed that he should be miserly. Olrik,<sup>1</sup> who shows that the story was taken by Saxo from an Old Norse source, thinks that the third Norn laid upon Ólaf the curse that

<sup>1</sup> *Saksen Oldhist.*, I, 71 f.

he should be betrayed by the servant he trusted most.

p. 102. The account in the Helgi-lay differs from most tales of fate-maidens coming to a new-born child, in that Helgi receives no bad gift.

That the Wolf-Theodoric story which influenced the Helgi-poet in his account of the hero's birth, contained a prophecy of the future greatness of the new-born child, appears probable after comparing the German poem with the Cormac story. It was doubtless this agreement which suggested to the Norse poet the introduction of the fate-maidens, the earliest example of whose appearance at an infant's birth is preserved in the story of Meleager.<sup>1</sup> It is just possible, however, that our poet was influenced in this borrowing by finding other points of contact between the Meleager and Helgi stories. Sigrún, for example, may have seemed to him to resemble Atalanta, Meleager's love, who was a huntress, and one of Diana's maiden-nymphs,<sup>2</sup> and who, armed as a man, took part with the men in the chase of the Calydonian boar.<sup>3</sup> In the First Helgi-lay, Sigrún rides with a company of battle-maidens, all of them birnie-clad and armed with helmet, spear, and bow. When Helgi helps Sigrún, he

<sup>1</sup> In the Irish Tale of the Destruction of Troy Hercules seeks help, among other places, at *Sparta* and *Salamina*. In Hyginus (*Fab.* 173, p. 29 in M. Schmidt's edition) *Sparta* and *Salamin* are named among the places which sent Oeneus help against the Calydonian boar.

<sup>2</sup> Atalanta is called, e.g. in *Myth. Vatic.*, 2, 144: *summa venatrix, Dianae scilicet comes*. Be it noted further that *disarsalrinn* (in *Yngl. s.*) is translated by *edes Diane* (in *Hist. Norveg.*).

<sup>3</sup> Note that Irish *triath* and *torc*, as well as the O.N. *jöfurr*, mean both wild-boar and king.

kills her relatives; when Meleager helps Atalanta, he kills his mother's brothers.<sup>1</sup>

It is perhaps also worth mentioning that Meleager is p. 103. called a son of Mars, and that the Helgi-poet represents his hero as sprung from a race of famous warriors. He made him a son of Sigmund, the hero specially protected by the Battle-God Odin, and of Borghild, *i.e.* the battle-maiden dwelling in the castle. Naturally, then, the poet felt impelled to let fate-maidens predict the hero's greatness even at his birth.

## IX

### ENGLISH AND IRISH INFLUENCE ON THE SECOND HELGI-LAY.

PASSING on to the verses now known collectively as the 'Second Lay of Helgi Hundingsbani,'<sup>2</sup> I would first call attention to certain expressions peculiar to that poem, which seem to throw some light on the question where its author lived.

The so-called Second Helgi-lay is made up of a p. 105. series of strophes, brought together in recent times, all of which are in the metre *fornyrðislag*, with the exception of st. 29, which is in *ljóðaháttr*. These strophes,

<sup>1</sup> *Illa cum Meleagri fidem implorasset, ille intervenit et amorem cognationi anteposuit avunculosque suos occidit* (Hyginus, *Fables*, ed. Schmidt, 174, p. 29 M.).

<sup>2</sup> After the First Helgi-lay, there follows in the old ms. the story of Helgi, the son of Hljorvarth, introduced by an account of his father. Then Helgi Hundingsbani reappears.

which to some extent do not agree with one another, and which do not form a complete whole, are introduced by a bit of prose headed 'On the Völsungs.' Prose passages, moreover, are scattered here and there throughout the poem, uniting different strophes; and the concluding words are also in prose.

The first four strophes present scenes from Helgi's feuds with Hunding. The latter is slain. In st. 5-13 we have the first conversation between Helgi and Sigrún, the daughter of Högni. In st. 14-18, which in a prose passage are said to belong to 'The Old Lay of the Völsungs,' Sigrún comes to Helgi, and embraces and kisses him. She tells him that she loved him before she saw him, but that she is betrothed to Høthbrodd. Helgi bids her not be afraid: she shall live safely with him (Helgi). Next, a prose passage tells of Helgi's sea-expedition to the land of the sons of Granmar. A little of the conversation between Sinfjötli and Guthmund follows, with a reference to the First Helgi-lay, which, as we have seen, had already found a place in the MS. Then comes a prose passage which records the battle in which Helgi overcomes the sons of Granmar and their allies, Högni and his kinsmen. In st. 25 Sigrún's conversation with the dying Høthbrodd on the battle-field is given; and in st. 26-29 that between Sigrún and Helgi. Then, after the words '*þetta kvað Guðmundr Granmars sonr*,' come four strophes (19-22) which have no relation to the context. These contain the retorts in the word-combat between Guthmund and Sinfjötli already mentioned, but in a different form from that first given, along with two strophes (essentially the same as H. H., I, 45-46), in

which Helgi puts an end to the dispute (23-24). The words in these strophes were, for the most part, abbreviated by the scribe since they corresponded pretty closely with what he had already written in the First Lay. A prose bit follows, in which we are told that Helgi marries Sigrún, and is afterwards killed by her brother Dag, who thus revenges his father's death. In st. 30-38 Dag informs Sigrún of Helgi's murder, whereupon Sigrún curses Dag, and lauds Helgi. The dead Helgi is now associated with Odin in the rule of Valhöll. He bids Hunding do servile labour there (st. 39). Helgi comes after sunset as a dead man to his grave-mound, where the living Sigrún embraces him. When day dawns, he rides back to Valhöll, never more to return (st. 40-51). In the prose conclusion we are told that Sigrún soon dies of grief.

There are several words in these verses which point to the British Isles.

When Sigrún meets Helgi on the battle-field after the battle, in which most of her relatives have fallen, he says to her (H. H., II, 28):

*Liggja 'at iordán'*  
*allra flectir*  
*núðjar þínir*  
*at nám orðnir.*

In O.N. this can only mean: 'By Jordan lie the great majority of thy relatives, become corpses.' That the poet should have imagined the slain as lying *by Jordan*, is most remarkable. Therefore editors have altered

the text to *Liggja at jorðu*, which they take to mean 'lie on the earth.' But, though *at*, 'by,' can well be used before the name of the river Jordan, 'on the earth' in O.N. is *á* (not *at*) *jorðu*. If, now, *á jorðu* were the original expression, it would not be easy to explain how the scribe came to write *at iordán*. It seems to me probable, therefore, that the original expression was

p. 107. the A.S. *on eorðan*, 'on the earth,' and that this the poet took into O.N. in the form *at Jordán*, 'by Jordan.' We should thus have merely another example of the tendency to introduce fantastic names of places which is evident in the Helgi-poems—as, *e.g.*, when the place where Atli, King Hjorvarth's faithful man, dwells, is called *at Glasislundi* (H. Hj., I), *i.e.* 'by the tree with the golden foliage.'

If this conjecture is justified, then it follows that:—

1. The first line in H. H., II, 24 is a working-over of a line in an A.S. poem. (Possibly the same might be said of the following three lines, although we should be entirely unjustified in postulating an A.S. model for the whole poem.)

2. The conjectural A.S. line was probably not in the Northumbrian dialect; for a Leyden MS. of one of the Riddles has the Northumbrian form *ofaer eorðu*, 'over the earth,' while the Exeter Book writes (in the same riddle) *ofer eorðan*.

3. The Norseman who first carried over *on eorðan* and wrote it in O.N. *at Jordán*, had heard the Palestine river mentioned in Christian stories.

4. The Norse poet who adopted the line *Liggja at Jordán* must have learned the A.S. model of this verse

from an Englishman in England, or elsewhere in Britain.<sup>1</sup>

In H. H., II, 20, Sinfjötli, in conversation with Guthmund, says of Helgi:

*hann hefir 'epli'  
ættar þinnar  
arf 'fjorsunga'  
und sik þrungit.*

'He has subdued the inheritance of thy race.' It is p. 108. generally acknowledged that *æðli* must mean here 'inherited property, allodial possession'; but it cannot be proved that *æðli* had this sense in pure O.N. In O.N. the word means 'race, origin,' and 'nature.' Finnur Jónsson changes the MS. *epli* to *óþle*. But *æðli* in this line may have been carried over into O.N. in the meaning 'allodial possession, inherited land,' from the A.S. *ēðle*, dative of *ēðel*, which has that meaning. Like *iordán*, *epli* points to a West Saxon form.<sup>2</sup>

The word '*fjorsunga*' is gen. pl. of *fjorsungr*, the name of a fish.<sup>3</sup> The name recurs as *Fjærasing*, *Fjæsing*, *Fjesing* in modern Norwegian dialects, but, it should be

<sup>1</sup> Björn Ólsen says, in *Tímarit*, 1894, pp. 30 f, that he has sought diligently in all the Eddic poems without being able to find a single word or a single word-form which, in his opinion, is not or has not been Icelandic. In what precedes, I have pointed out several words and word-forms in these poems which are not Icelandic, and I shall point out many more in the continuation of these investigations.

<sup>2</sup> In Northumbrian *ēðel* has the form *æðil*, and on the Franks Casket we have the dative *oþlc*.

<sup>3</sup> In Sn. Edda, I, 579, *fjorsungr* occurs among names of fishes: the author of the verse doubtless knew the passage in H. II., I. The occurrence of the word as the name of the hawk in Sn. Edda, II, 488 and 571, is possibly due to a wrong explanation of the word in the Lay.



noted, only in the most southerly part of Norway, and in modern Danish dialects (see the dictionaries of Ross, Molbech, and Feilberg). It designates a fish with large stripes, *trachinus draco*. In the Helgi-passage *ffjorsunga* is used to designate Hothbrodd's race; but why the members of that race are called by this name the poem does not explain, and this remarkable designation is still entirely obscure. Since *æðli*, as it seems, is an English word, we are at once prompted to seek the explanation of *ffjorsunga* in Anglo-Saxon. I am bold enough to conjecture that it was introduced by the Norse poet instead of an A.S. \**wiersinga*, i.e. (land) of worse men, (the land which had fallen into the hands of) men of an inferior race. An A.S. \**wiersing*, \**wyrsing*, does not occur in the extant literature, but would be a perfectly regular derivative of *wiersa*,  
 p. 109. *wyrsa*, 'worse.'<sup>1</sup> This conjecture is supported by the fact that *wyrsa*, 'worse,' is actually used in A.S. heroic poetry to refer to men of a foreign race to whom one feels one's self in opposition, and on whom one looks down.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Designations of persons in *-ing* are formed from adjectives, e.g. *earming*, *lytling*. That such words can also be formed from comparatives may be seen from the Midde Dutch *ouderinc*, 'senior,' O.N. *feðrþetrungr*, 'a person who is better than his father.' To account for the alteration of A.S. *wiersinga* into O.N. *ffjorsunga*, we may say that the former word was probably not understood, and that *w* and *f* shifted readily when *f* preceded. (Here A.S. *ierfe* (O.N. *arf*) doubtless preceded the A.S. *wiersinga*.)

<sup>2</sup> In *Béowulf*, after the fall of Hygelâc in the land of the Franks, *wyrsan wifgrecan wæl ræafedon* (l. 1212), 'worse warriors robbed the battle-field.' In the same poem, *Béowulf* remarks that his old King Hrethel needed not to seek among foreign peoples *wyrsan wifgrecan*, 'worse warriors' (l. 2496).

The Norseman who introduced *fjersunga* into the text may have been thinking of the characteristic feature ascribed to *fjæsing* in Smaalenene (S.E. Norway), viz. poisonous fins. It is believed in Lässö that a prick of the *fjæsing*'s fin in hand or foot causes pain and swelling, and the inhabitants say of a very angry person: 'He is as angry as a *fjæsing*.' The Norsemen thought also perhaps of tales of men born of fishes.<sup>1</sup>

When the dead Helgi has to leave his grave-mound, to which he has come for one night from Valhöll to meet Sigrún, he says:

*skal ek fyr vestan  
vindhjálms brúar,  
ðor salgofnir  
sigrhjód veki* (11, 49).

'I must be west of the bridges of heaven<sup>2</sup> before p. 110.  
"salgofnir" wakes the *einherjar*.' Here *salgofnir* must be either a poetic word for 'cock,' or the name of the cock in Valhöll. It occurs elsewhere only in a verse in two MSS. of Snorri's Edda<sup>3</sup> among poetic names for cock, and the author of that verse almost certainly knew the word from the Helgi-lay. An analogous poetic expression for *cocks*, with the same initial part, appears to be preserved in *salgaukar*, Grott. 7, 'cuckoos

<sup>1</sup> In an Irish tale, a salmon of the red gold made St. Finan's mother Becnait pregnant when she was bathing after sunset (*Æv. Celt.*, 11, 200). In *Bjarnarsaga Hltdalakappa* (ed. Friðriksson, p. 42), a malicious verse, which Björn sings about Thórth Kolbeinsson, tells how Thórth's mother was supposed to have conceived him after devouring an ugly fish. Other similar tales could be cited.

<sup>2</sup> One cannot understand *brúar* as gen. sing. without changing *fyr* to *fyrir*.

<sup>3</sup> Cod. A. M., 748, 4to (Sn. Ed., 11, 488), and Cod. A. M., 757, 4to (Sn. Ed., 11, 572).

of the hall,'<sup>1</sup> The second part of the compound, viz. *gofnir*, has not, however, hitherto been satisfactorily explained.

In my opinion *salgofnir* had its origin in *\*salgopnir*.<sup>2</sup> This word is derived from the Irish *gop*, 'beak (of a bird), mouth, snout'—*gofnir*, *\*gopnir*, is a poetic coinage, like most other words in *-nir*. It means 'the beaked one,' i.e. the bird; cf. the name of the steed *Mélnir* (H. H., p. 111. I, 51), from *mél*, 'bit.'<sup>3</sup> Irish *gop*, later pronounced *gob*, went over into English, especially the Scottish dialect of English, as *gob*, 'mouth.' The word is still familiar in some parts of America also. In Mod. Icel. *gopi*, 'gap, opening,' is used; *haltu firi gopann á þjer*, 'shut up, keep quiet.'<sup>4</sup> Here we have probably another

<sup>1</sup> Or of *sal gaukar*. The author of the prose bit on Grotti in Cod. reg. and leß of Sn. Edda misunderstood the word here—taking it to mean the cuckoo.

<sup>2</sup> A poetic name for the eagle is written in Sn. Ed. in U (11, 354), 748 (11, 488), 757 (11, 572), leß (11, 597), Cod. reg. (I, 490, where the forms in U and 748 differ), *gallofnir*. But *gallopnir* in leß, Sn. Ed., 11, 598; and the form with *p* is in *þorsdrópa* (Sn. Ed., I, 292, in Cod. reg. and Worm.) made certain by its rhyming with *gaupnum*. I leave it undecided whether the change from *\*salgopnir* to *salgofnir* is to be explained by the influence of the analogous word *ofnir* (cf. the name of the cock, *viðofnir*), or from the fact that the syllable to which *p* belonged, had a secondary accent; *pn* can also readily be misread for *fn*. Thus in Sigrdr. 13, in Cod. reg., earlier editors read by mistake *hoddropsis* for *hodd-rofnis*. Note *sopna*=*sofna* in Cod. A. M. 673 A, 4to; *hípní*=*hifni*, *himni* in *Eirspennill*, fol. 177a.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Andhrímnir*, *hrím*; *Sessrúmnir*, *rím*; *Falhófnir*, *hófr*; etc. On words in *-nir*, cf. Sievers, 'Ueber Germanische Nominalbildungen in -aja-, -ēja-', in *Königl. Sächs. Gesellsch. d. Wiss., Sitzung vom 14 Juli, 1894*, pp. 148-50.

<sup>4</sup> 'Stringe rostrum' (Björn Haldorsen). Egilsson has already explained *Salgofnir* by *Salgopnir*, 'a *gapa* hiare, *gopi* hiatus, qs. in aedibus hians, aperto rostro canens.'

loan-word from Irish *gop*, 'beak, mouth.'<sup>1</sup> *Salgofnir* thus designates the cock as 'the bird of the hall,' as 'the house-bird.'

The cock that wakes the *einherjar* in Valhøll is known not only from the strophe here under discussion in the Helgi-lay, but from *Völuspá*, 43. It is important for the history of the Valhøll myth that this idea is expressed so early in a strophe which contains an Irish word.<sup>2</sup>

It should be mentioned that the *einherjar* in the same strophe (49) of the Second Helgi-lay are called *sigrþjóð*,<sup>3</sup> and that that compound, which never occurs p. 112. elsewhere in O.N., corresponds to *sigebéod*, 'victorious people,' or 'people who overcome in battle,' which is to be found in *Beowulf*, 2204, and frequently in A.S. poetry.

Further, in the same strophe, *vindhjálmr*, 'the wind-helmet,' i.e. 'the heavens,' or, better, 'the air,' agrees

<sup>1</sup> In Mod. Icel. *gopi*, the Irish word is probably smelted with a true Norwegian word. Aasen has *gop* (open *o*), neut., 'a great deep, an abyss,' from Norddalen in Søndmøre; Ross from Hornindal, Nordfjord. Or can the Norwegian word have arisen from the pl. form of O.N. *gap*?

<sup>2</sup> Whitley Stokes, to whom I had communicated my idea of *salgofnir*, regards (Bezenb. *Beitr.*, XXI, 126) *gofnir* as a genuine Scandinavian word, related to Irish *gop*. But against this view we can oppose both the vowel *o* and the circumstance that the word occurs only in a skaldic kenning in II. H., II, and nowhere else in O.N. literature, and that it is unknown to the dialects of modern Norway, Sweden, and Denmark.

<sup>3</sup> Finnur Jónsson inserts *sigþjóð*, 'battle-people.' This change does not seem to me necessary. In the artificial skaldic poetry not only *sig-* but also *sigr-* has the meaning 'battle' as first element of such a compound (see Gislason, *Efterladte Skrifter*, I, 99, 102, 274, 281). This meaning has developed through words like *sigrþjóð* from the older meaning, 'overpowering force in fight' (especially 'victory'). That in the Eddic poems also, *sigr-* has the same meaning as *sig-* is shown, e.g., by *Sigrínn* alongside *Sigmundr*.

with A.S. modes of expression. In the rather late Icel. religious poem *Leiðarvísan*, 30, 45, the heavens are called *lopthjálmr*, 'the helmet of the air'; *sólar hjálmr*, 'the helmet of the sun,' and similar expressions with *hjálmr*, occur in Icelandic skaldic poetry as designations of heaven. In A.S. the atmosphere is called *lyfthelm*, 'air-helmet' (*Gnom. Cott.*, 46; *Exod.*, 60), *lyfte helm*, Riddle, 4<sup>54</sup>. These A.S. designations accord with many other A.S. poetic expressions in which *helm* is used of shelter, covering in general. But since O.N. *hjálmr*, 'helmet,' is not used in so wide a sense, the O.N. poetic expressions for 'air' and 'heaven' which I have named, appear to have arisen in imitation of A.S. forms.

Sigrún says of Helgi (in II, 38) after his death: 'Helgi towered up above the chieftains as an ash with its splendid growth over thorn-bushes, or as a young stag, wet with dew, who strides forward, higher than all deer, with horns glittering against heaven itself.'<sup>1</sup> By 'all deer' is certainly meant smaller animals of the deer race, like hinds or roes.<sup>2</sup> The exaggerated poetic expression 'whose horns glitter against heaven itself' does not force us to think of a mythical stag.

We find the same picture of the stag in *Guðr.*, II, 2, where Guthrún says of the dead Sigurth: 'So was Sigurth above Gjuki's sons as the green leek, grown up above the grass, or as the high-limbed stag above

<sup>1</sup> *Svá bar Helgi | af hildingum | sem itrskapaðr | askr af þyrni, | eða sá dýrkálfr | döggu slungiann | er þfri ferr | þllum dýrum | ok horn glóa | við himin sjálfan.* The imitation in *Konráðsrím.*, II, 3, suggests that *þyrni* was understood as the dat. of *þyrnir*; but I take it rather to be the dat. of a neuter *þyrni*, 'briar-thicket,' for if *þyrnir* had been used, it would most likely have been put in the plural.

<sup>2</sup> Björn Ólsen (*Timarit*, 1894, p. 59), says '=skógardír, sjerstaklega rádir.'



the grey deer, or as red gold in comparison with grey (impure) silver.'<sup>1</sup> 'The grey deer' are probably, as Björn Ólsen suggests, roe-deer, which are of a greyish-brown colour in winter. The evident likeness between the stories of Helgi and Sigurth makes it probable that one of the strophes in which the dead hero is likened to a hart was the model of the other. The expression in the Guthrún-poem seems to be the simpler, and is possibly, therefore, the older.<sup>2</sup>

That the comparison of a hero to a stag was a p. 114. common one in O.N. heroic poetry we see from the fact that it is (inappropriately) applied to a woman: Thora Borgarhjört, Ragnar Lothbrók's first wife, was so called because she was fairer than other women, as the stag is fairer than other animals.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Svá var Sigurðr | uf sonum Gjuka | sem væri grann laukr | ör grasi vaxinn |* *Éða hjörtr hábeinn | um hǫsum dýrum | Éða gull glöðrautt | af grá silfri.* *Hǫsum* is a correction by F. Jónsson of the *hvossum* in the MS. I had independently decided on the same correction. F. J. takes it to refer to wolves. Björn Ólsen, however, opposes such an interpretation. To his reasons I add the following: if the expression referred to wolves, it would by this picture describe Gjuki's sons as Sigurth's enemies; but Guthrún's account shows that they are not to be considered at that time otherwise than as Sigurth's retainers.

<sup>2</sup> Sijmons (Paul-Braune, *Beit.*, IV, 200) and Müllenhoff (*Deut. Alt.*, V, 392) are of the opposite opinion.

<sup>3</sup> *Fornaldarsǫgur*, I, 237. On 'Hart' as a surname for a man, cf. Fritzner, *Ordbog*, 2nd ed. Landstad, *Norske Folkeviser*, p. 401, has a *stev* (lyric poem) from Telemarken in which men are likened to harts.

*Hjorten spelar i heio nor,  
han sprikjer si klo.  
Hau so gjere alle dei Herjus sønninn  
som giljar mæ or, etc.*

But this verse was doubtless not originally composed in Norway. Corresponding verses are to be found in Sweden and Denmark, where they have been joined to ballads partly or wholly lyric in character. See R. Steffen in *Uppsålstudier*, pp. 107 f.

To compare a hero who surpasses other warriors to the antlered stag which towers above other deer in a herd, was natural in a land where the stag was common and where stag-hunting was the habitual pleasure of chieftains. The Helgi-poet makes the comparison with so much life and vigour as to show clearly, I think, that the poem could not have been composed in Iceland.<sup>1</sup> For the same reason, it is improbable that the Helgi and Guthrún poems, in which this simile occurs, were composed in Norway. It cannot, indeed, be denied that in ancient times there were stags in Norway, especially in the western part; but there is nothing to indicate that they were much thought of by the people. Besides, both the Helgi-poem and (more plainly) the Guthrún-poem appear to contrast the roe-deer with the stag; and the roe-deer has scarcely ever been wild in Norway.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, the stag has from an early period played a prominent part in life and in story among the people in the British Isles. Stag-hunts are particularly described in old Irish heroic sagas; and therefore the comparison of the hero to a stag might easily have arisen in Ireland.<sup>3</sup>

There are thus several words, expressions, and images in the Second Helgi-lay which appear to show that the Norse author of the poem lived among Irish and

<sup>1</sup> Herein I am at one with F. Jónsson (*Litt. Hist.*, 1, 258) as opposed to Bj. Ólsen (*Timarit*, 1894, p. 59). That the hart may be mentioned by a modern Icelandic poet cannot be used as an argument against my opinion.

<sup>2</sup> See R. Collett in O. J. Broch's *Statistisk Årbog for Kongeriget Norge*, p. 604. The name of the Norwegian river *Hirta* appears to be derived from *hjertr*.

<sup>3</sup> In Ireland there are also stories of a man turned into a stag.

English, and understood to some extent the language of both peoples.<sup>1</sup>

The other pictures from nature which appear in the Second Helgi-lay do not, indeed, necessarily point to p. 116. Ireland or England, though they agree with natural scenery and mode of living in these lands. Some of them, however, forbid us to think of Iceland as the home of the poem.

In II, 22, Sinfjötli says to Guthmund, who has spoken of battle and revenge: 'Rather shalt thou, O Guthmund! tend goats and climb rough mountain-cliffs with hazel-pole (*heslikylfu*) in thy hands.' True, there were goats in Iceland, but a poet who had never been out of Iceland could scarcely have composed this strophe. In Norway were to be found both goats and hazel; but in Norway old historical writings say nothing of special herdsmen for goats: to be a goat-herd was no distinct occupation, for the same person usually herded both goats and sheep.<sup>2</sup> In *Rígsþula*, 12,

<sup>1</sup> In the First Helgi-lay there also occurs an expression which seems to point to stag-hunting. In I, 49, *rakka hirtir* (stags of the parral-ropes) is more probably a designation of the masts than of the ships themselves. The word *rakki* means a ring put in the middle of the sail-yards, by which the sail is fastened to the mast, and which runs up and down with the sails. But *rakki* means also a dog. The expression in the poem contains a play on words. The mast on which the ring, which is called *rakki*, runs up and down, is compared to the stag, on whom the dog in a hunt runs up, only to be cast down again. Rosenberg explains the expression somewhat differently in *Nordboernes Aandsliv*, I, 401, note.

<sup>2</sup> In a ballad from Telemarken we read of a herdsmen: *han gjette bæ souir & gjeitar* (he herded both sheep and goats). In Norway the names of places which begin with *Geits-* appear, indeed, to argue for *geitir*, 'a goat-herd'; but the word does not occur in that meaning in the old literature.



the sons of the thrall herd goats. So in Danish compositions of the Middle Ages goat-herding is regarded as one of the most contemptible of occupations. According to Saxo, a witch sets Sigrith (Syritha) to herd goats, and this occupation of hers is also mentioned in an inserted verse.<sup>1</sup> In like manner, Kragelil or Kraaka herds goats in a Danish ballad.<sup>2</sup> It is hard to say how far this feature is due in these cases to the influence of Eddic poems. In later Icelandic fabulous tales, as well as in ballads from the Faroes and Telemarken, goat-herding is mentioned with the greatest contempt, just as in the Helgi-lay.<sup>3</sup> This agrees with the situation in Ireland, where goat-herding was a despised occupation.<sup>4</sup>

Compare H. H., II, 37: 'Helgi had made all his enemies and their kinsmen as timorous as goats, which

<sup>1</sup> Saxo, ed. Müller, Bk. VII, p. 332; cf. Olrik, *Saksnes Oldhist.*, II, 234.

<sup>2</sup> Grundtvig, *Danm. gl. Folkev.*, No. 22A, 7, 9, 11; No. 23A, 9.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Fyrr muntu verða geitahirðir á Gautlandi, enn þú hafir nokkut yfirboð þessa staðar* (*Hrólfs Gautrekssaga* in *Fornaldarsögur*, III, 98). In the ballad of Hermod Idde from Telemarken: *eg tenkte, han blei ein gjeiteherre (=geitahirðir) som du å dei andre fleire* (in Landstad, p. 208, by mistake, *geysteherre*). In the Faroe ballad, Hermundur illi: *Tínum hölsi mildi eg náð, ei tínum geitasveini* (*Fær. Anthol.*, I, 70). See also Fritzner, *Ordbog*, s.v. *geit*.

<sup>4</sup> See Zimmer in *Gott. Gel. Anz.*, 1891 (No. 5), pp. 179 f, who cites the following places from *Acta sanct. Hib.*, 1888: 'Quodam tempore Fintanus erat in scholis sancti Comgalli, qui quodam die jussit ei ut suas capras pasceret. Quod officium minime honestum Fintanus putans, oravit ut capre verterentur in boves, quod et factum est.'—Col. 227, 5. 'Item quadam die puer Lugidus missus est ut gregem caprarum custodiret; sed grex ovium erat quandiu Lugidus custodiebat eam.'—Col. 267, 16.

run wildly before the wolf down from the mountain, full of terror.<sup>1</sup>

In the Helgi-lay we read that the goatherd has a hazel-pole in his hand. This feature, too, may have been borrowed from life in Ireland. In a tale which belongs to the old north-Irish epic-cycle, it is said of a man who accompanied the war-fury Morrigan: 'a two-pronged stick of hazel-wood was on his back, while he drove a cow before him.'<sup>2</sup>

We may also note that tending swine is likewise spoken of in the Helgi-lays as a contemptible occupation.<sup>3</sup> The Irish regarded swineherds with contempt;<sup>4</sup> p. 118. but other peoples had the same feeling, so that this expression proves nothing as to the home of the poem.

Other pictures which the poem presents us are, briefly stated, as follows: the ash rising high above the thorn-bushes (H. H., II, 38); the eagles sitting on the ash after sunset (II, 50); a bear-hunt (II, 8). When the poet calls the birds of prey 'the goslings of the valkyries' (II, 7), he refers to the custom of keeping

<sup>1</sup> In Irish works also, at any rate in later times, the hero who rushes in upon and chases his enemies is compared to a wolf. In Joyce, *Old Celtic Romances*, p. 205, we read: 'Fiona overthrew them . . . like a wolf among a flock of sheep' (in the tale called 'The Fairy Palace of the Quicken Trees,' after mss. of the eighteenth century); *Cath Ruis na Ríg*, p. 72. But the picture meets us also among other peoples—e.g. Dudo says (275) of the Normans: 'velut lupi per bidentium ovilia occidens et prosternens hostium severiter agmina' (cited by Steenstrup, *Normannerne*, I, 362). In the *Iliad*, 16, 352 ff, and elsewhere.

<sup>2</sup> In the story *Táin bó Regamna* in Windisch, *Irische Texte*, II, 2, pp. 243, 249 (after the Book of Leccan of the fifteenth century and Egerton 1782, of the sixteenth century).

<sup>3</sup> See H. H., I, 44; II, 39. In *Rígsþula*, 12, the sons of the thrall tend swine. Cf. *Atlámdl*, 62; *Hervar.*, II, st. 14; Fms. VI, 258.

<sup>4</sup> See Zimmer in *Gött. Gel. Anz.*, 1891 (No. 5), p. 180.

geese as house-birds. The maid-servant stands by the quern and grinds *valbygg* (i.e. barley from Valland, II, 3). This word is now in use in the interior of Norway (Buskeruds Fogderi, Hallingdal).

Side by side with the expressions in the Second Lay which seem clearly to show A.S. influence, there are others which agree with A.S. expressions, but where the agreement is of such a kind as to afford no proof of borrowing from English. These expressions, however, deserve notice, for they at any rate support the idea that the Helgi-poems stand in close connection with A.S. works.

The word *hermegir* (II, 5), 'warriors,' occurs nowhere else in O.N., but in the A.S. Genesis 2483, we have *heremæccas*. That A.S. *mæccas* is not grammatically identical with O.N. *megir* is of little consequence.

Sigrún is called *dís skjoldunga* in II, 51; and Brynhild has the same name in *Brot*, 14. Yet neither Sigrún nor Brynhild is of the race of the Shieldings. Cf. A.S. *ides Scyldinga*, *Béow.*, 1168, used of a Shielding queen. Here the A.S. expression has a more original meaning. O.N. *dís*, 'woman,' does not, indeed, correspond in form with A.S. *ides*, 'woman'; but it agrees in meaning, and the two words are so near  
 p. 119. each other in sound that *dís* could very easily be inserted instead of *ides*, if the A.S. expression were carried over to the Norse lay.

The dead Helgi says of Sigrún's tears :

*hvert fellr blöðugt*  
*á brjóst grami*  
*úrsvalt 'in fjalgt'*  
*ekka þrungit* (II, 45).

'Each tear falls bloody on the king's breast, ice-cold . . . burdened with sorrow.' The most probable explanation yet given of *innfjálgt* is 'pressing in deep.' Such a meaning for the word is not, however, according to O.N. usage; but the reading is supported by the A.S. intransitive use of the verb which corresponds to O.N. *fela*, 'to conceal.'<sup>1</sup>

'Bloody' as an epithet of tears of sorrow and despair occurs also in Irish. We read, *e.g.*, of the Druid Cathbad: 'He wept in streams great red tears of blood, so that his chest and bosom were wet.'<sup>2</sup> But this expression proves nothing as to the home of the poem; for bloody tears are mentioned also in German popular poetry<sup>3</sup> and in the Persian epos. We still say: '*græde sine blodige Taarer*,' 'to weep one's bloody tears.'

When Guthmund has seen the enemies who have come to his land, he says: 'battle-redness spreads itself over the vikings' (*verpr vígroða um víkinga*). The word *vígroði*, 'battle-redness,' means a red gleam in the air which foreshadows battle.<sup>4</sup> Similar expressions p. 120. occur in Irish tales. In the Book of Leinster we read that Cuchulinn, when the hostile hosts from south and west carried war over the borders of Ulster, 'saw from

<sup>1</sup> *þæt ic in ne fele*, 'ut non inheream,' Psalm, Surt., 68, 15; cf. A.S. *inne fealh*, 'penetrated.'

<sup>2</sup> See *Cath Ruis na Ríg for Boinn*, ed. E. Hogan, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup> In *Seifriedslied*: 'Sie weinte aus ihren Augen alle Tage das rote Blut.'

<sup>4</sup> Cf. before the battle of Stiklestad: *vígroðe lyster a skyen fyrr en bløð kær a iorðena* (*Ólafssaga helga*, Christiania, 1849, chap. 91). By imitation of H. H.: *vígroða verpr á hlýrni*, *Merlin*, 2, 68; *vígroða vilda varp af rómu* (*Stjörnu-Oldra draumr*, ed. Vigfusson, Copenhagen, 1860, p. 121).

him the ardent sparkling of the bright golden weapons over the heads of the four great provinces of Erin, before the fall of the cloud of even.<sup>1</sup>

In II, 42, the chieftain is called *fólks jaðarr*, 'the people's protector.' *Jaðarr*, here used figuratively, literally means in O.N. 'edge, border,' and in that meaning is very old and much used in Norse. It is in reality the same word as A.S. *eodor*, 'fence,' and corresponds to O.H.G. *etar*, M.H.G. *eter*, 'geflochtener Zaun, Umzaunung; Saum, Rand überhaupt.' We have the same figurative use in Fásn., 36, *hers jaðarr*, and in Lokas., 35, where Frey is called *ása jaðarr*, 'the chieftain of the gods.' This may be compared with poetic expressions in other languages, ancient and modern, as when Frederic IV. is called in a verse, '*Folkets værn og gjærde*' (the people's defence and fence), or when Ajax is called in the *Iliad*, ἔρκος Ἀχαιῶν. So the king in *Béowulf* is called *eodor Scyldinga, Ingwina*; in the Gnostic verses, Ex. 90, *eodor æðelinga*, 'the (de)fence of the Shieldings, Ingvins, high-born men.' English influence is here probable, but it cannot be proved.<sup>2</sup>

Of the dead Helgi we read in II, 42: *dólgspor dreyra*, 'the wounds bleed.' The word *dólg*, neut., oftenest used in composition, means in poetic language 'battle,' but more originally 'hostility.' By *dólgspor* wounds are artificially designated as 'battle-tracks.' But, on the other hand, that word appears to have originated under the influence of A.S. *dolhsweð*, neut., in the pl.

<sup>1</sup> *Rev. Celt.*, 1, 42.

<sup>2</sup> The name of the man *Jǫðurr* (*Fóstbraðrasaga* and *Glúma*) should be noted here.

*dolhswaðu*, 'scars,' which is a compound of A.S. *dolh*, *dolg*, neut., 'wound,' and *swað*, neut., pl. *swaðu*, 'tracks.'

X

THE SECOND HELGI-LAY IN ITS RELATION TO  
OTHER EDDIC POEMS.

THE Second Helgi-lay shows the influence of the pp. 121-3. Wayland-lay (*Völundarkviða*), probably also that of the Second Guthrún-lay (*Guthrúnarkviða*, II). In its turn, it affected several of the Eddic poems—*Brot af Sigurðarkviðu*, the complete Sigurth-lay, and the First Guthrún-lay; probably also *Oddrúnargrátr*, *Hyndluljóð*, and *Atlamál*.<sup>1</sup>

This shows us that the Second Lay was composed under conditions similar, with regard to external influences, to those which affected the First Lay. These two lays, then, consist of several parts or fragments belonging, so to speak, to the same literary school, traditionally associated with one another. The verses of the Second Lay are, however, somewhat older than those of the First Lay, since the author of the latter was influenced by them. We get the impression that the younger lay was composed perhaps half a century after the older.

<sup>1</sup> For the detailed discussion on which these statements are based, see Appendix IV.



## XI

## HELGI HUNDINGSBANI A DANISH KING.

p. 123. THE Helgi-lays are not historical poems, and Helgi, as he appears in them, is in no way an historical personality. Nor is the Helgi-story a popular tale which involuntarily suffered the changes, natural and necessary, in stories preserved by tradition. It was evidently put into form and arranged by poets who were conscious literary artists.

Helgi is brought into connection with places which exist only in the realm of poesy.<sup>1</sup> The names of some of the places are poetic forms easily understood. Certain poetic names of essentially the same kind are to be found in the A.S. *Béowulf*, e.g. *Hrefnawudu* or *Hrefnesholt*, 'Ravenswood,' where a bloody fight takes place between the Géats and the Swedes.<sup>2</sup> Similarly in the Helgi-poems a battle—in which the wolf is sated—takes place *at Frekasteini*, 'by Wolfstone.'<sup>3</sup> The king sits down tired after a battle—in which the eagle gets corpses to eat—*und Arasteini*, 'under Eaglestone' (I, 14; cf. above, p. 70), just as the Géats find *Béowulf* dead after his fight with the dragon when they come under Eagle-ness (*under Earnanæs*).<sup>4</sup> Ships sail out

<sup>1</sup> P. E. Müller has already said (*Sagabibliothek*, II, 56) that the majority of names in the Helgi-lays appear to be allegorical. Vigfusson also noted that the geography of the Helgi-poet was, on the whole, merely fantastic (*C. P. B.*, I, LX).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. my notes in Paul-Braune, *Beit.*, XII, 11.

<sup>3</sup> H. H., I, 44; I, 53; II, 21; II, 26; H. Hj., 39—cf. above, p. 86.

<sup>4</sup> *Béow.*, 3031. Much puts it otherwise in *Ztsch. f. d. Alt.*, XXXIII, 1.

from *Stafnsnes*, 'Stem-ness' (I, 23), and assemble at *Brandey* (I, 22), 'Brand-isle' (from *brandr*, a beam in the ship's prow). When the ships come from the stormy sea into calm water, they lie *í Unavágum*, 'in Una-waves' (*una* meaning 'to be at rest'). The poet probably also regarded *at Logafjöllum* (I, 13, 15) as a poetic name—that of the place where the battle takes place between Helgi and the sons of Hunding—for he doubtless thought that it was called 'Flame-fells,' because after the battle Helgi saw a radiant gleam there: lightning flashed: it was the advance of the battle-maidens.<sup>1</sup>

When Helgi has slain Hunding, he is, according to the Second Lay (st. 5 and 6), *í Brunavágum*, and commits depredations on the coast there. The name then perhaps means, a bay on whose coast there is burning or harrying. Starkath falls in a battle *at Styrkleifum* (II, 27), *i.e.* 'battle-cliffs' (from *styr*, 'a battle').<sup>2</sup>

Sigrún, Helgi's beloved, dwelt at *Sefafjöllum* (II, 25, 36, 42, 45, 48). This name may have been intended to mean 'Love-fells'<sup>3</sup> (from *sefi*, 'mind, passion, love'); p. 125. but possibly it was chosen because the poet had heard of *Sævefjeld* in Vestergötland, which rises from the Cattagat by the mouth of the southern branch of the Gøta River, and extends northwards (cf. *Hávamál*, 105).<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Uhland, *Schriften*, VIII, 139, and Much, *Ztsch. f. d. Alt.*, XXXIII, 1, suppose that *Logafjöll* contains the name of the East-Germanic Lugier.

<sup>2</sup> Müllenhoff (*Deut. Alt.*, v, 1, p. 329) divides it thus: *Styrk-leifum*.

<sup>3</sup> See Müllenhoff, *Ztsch. f. d. Alt.*, XXIII, 169. I dare not hold *Sefafjöll* for a formation from \**Sefnaf* and connect it with *Semnonēs*.

<sup>4</sup> The mountain goes through Säfvedals Herred, formerly *Savadal*, which has its name from *Säfve-ån*. An island in the Gøta River is called Säfveholm. These names are probably to be connected with *sef*, rush. Others have suggested Pliny's *mons Sævo* to explain *Sefafjöll*.



Some of the poetic place-names, as I have already shown, appear to be modifications of foreign appellative expressions—e.g. *Himinvangar* (I, 8), 'plains of heaven'; at *Jordán* (II, 28), 'by Jordan.' Other place-names, moreover, may be modifications of names in foreign tales—e.g. *Sparinsheiðr* of *Sparta*, *Sólheimar* of *Salamina*.

There are, however, a number of place-names in the First Helgi-lay which can be shown to have really existed. These are found in Denmark and adjoining lands.

The author of the prose bit, On Sinfjötli's Death, imagined Helgi's home in Denmark; for we read there (p. 202): 'Sigmund, son of Völsung, was king in Frakkland (the land of the Franks by the Rhine). Sinfjötli was the eldest of his sons. The second was Helgi. . . . King Sigmund remained long in Denmark in the kingdom of Borghild (Helgi's mother) after he was married to her.'

In the First Lay also the conception of Helgi as King of Denmark appears clearly. In st. 8 we learn the names of the places which Sigmund gave his new-born son Helgi: *Hringstaði* | *Sólfjell* *Snæfjell* | *ok Sigarsvollu*, | *Hringstöð*, *Hátún* | *ok Himinvanga*. The first of these recurs in the last strophe of the poem. After Helgi has killed his rival, Högni's daughter Sigrún, his victory-genius, says to him: 'Hail thou king! thou shalt unopposed possess both Högni's daughter and Ringsted (*Hringstaða*), victory and land.' Here *Hringstaðir* is represented as the royal seat. Without doubt, the strophe which enumerates the places which Sigmund gave his son, contains many

names merely poetic or borrowed from stories of adventure ; but *Hringstaðir* is evidently of more significance than the rest, not only because it is named first, but also because, as we have seen, it is mentioned again at the end of the poem as Helgi's royal abode. In my opinion, the poet used the name *Hringstaðir* to designate Helgi as a *Danish* king, adding 'Sunfells,' 'Snowfells,' and 'Plains of Heaven' as mere poetic decoration.

*Hringstaðir* is well known to be *Ringsted* in Zealand. This place is called *Hringstaðir* in old Icelandic sagas and verses. It is called by Saxo *Ringstadium*, abl. *Ringstadiis*, in Valdemar's rent-roll *Ringstath*. A district (*herred*) was also called after the name of this town. The Zealand national assembly (*landsþing*), which is first mentioned in 1131, was held there. In the eleventh century it was one of the largest towns in Zealand, and it is named in stories of semi-historical times. Arngrim Jónsson, following the *Skjöldungasaga*, relates that King Frotho, father of Ingialldus, had his abode now in Leire, now in Ringsted.<sup>1</sup> According to *Fagrskinna*, Svein Forkbeard held in Ringsted a funeral feast in memory of his father Harald.<sup>2</sup> The *Hringstöð* p. 127. in our poem may possibly designate a harbour belonging to Ringsted, which was itself an inland town.

*Sigarsvellir* is mentioned shortly after *Hringstaðir*, and is therefore probably connected with the name of the inland town *Sigersted*, near Ringsted. This place is referred to by Saxo (ed. Müller, p. 346), who says

<sup>1</sup> See A. Olrik in *Aarbøger f. n. O.*, 1894, p. 86, 110 f.

<sup>2</sup> See especially Henry Petersen, *Om Nordboernes Gudedyrkelse og Gudetroe*, pp. 10 f, where he suggests that Ringsted was a religious and secular centre of Zealand in heathen times.

that the scene of what he tells about Hagbarthus was *Sigari oppidum*.<sup>1</sup>

In one of the verses (6) in the Second Lay, Helgi appears to be regarded as a Danish king; for when, on a voyage, he represents himself as the son of a peasant (his foster-father), he says: 'Our home is in *Læssø*.'

In II, 27, also, we seem to have a Danish place-name preserved. In the account of Helgi's fight with Høthbrodd and Hogni, *Hrollaug's* sons, along with Starkath, are represented as falling at *Hlébjörgum*. *Hlébjörg* agrees as to its form with *Læburgh*, now *Læborg*, in Ribe Stift in Jutland, south-west of Jællinge.<sup>2</sup> We may note also that Hogni (Höginus), Hild's father, is, in Saxo, a petty king in Jutland.

In this connection I may mention that Helgi in I, 55, is called *ättstafr Yngva*, 'descendant of Yngvi.' This also goes to show that he was regarded as a Danish king; for in *Beowulf* the Danish king is called *eodor Ingwina*, 'protector of the Ingwins (descendants of Yngvi),' *fréa Ingwina*, 'lord of the Ingwins'; and in the A.S. Runic Poem we read: 'Ing was first seen by men among the East-Danes.'

After Helgi has come with his fleet to the land of his enemies, one of the latter inquires:

p. 128.

*Hværr er skjöldungr  
sá er skipum stýrir?* (II, 19).

<sup>1</sup> Older Danish forms of the name may be found in *Annaler for nord. Oldk.*, 1863, p. 267.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Danish *Wibiergh*, which later became *Wiborgh*. Both *Fabyergh* and *Faburgh* are written; and these two parts of a name shift in other Danish place-names (O. Nielsen in *Blandinger*, I, 229 f).

'What Shielding is it who guides the ships?' Here *skjoldungr* is used in a sense approaching that which it got in later times, viz. 'king' in general; but, nevertheless, it seems to point to the fact that the hero was really a Shielding from the beginning, and therefore a Danish king. The same may be said of the words in II, 29: *vinnat skjoldungar sköpum*, 'Shieldings cannot resist the decrees of fate,' and of those in II, 51, where Helgi's wife after his death is called *dls skjoldunga*, 'woman of the Shieldings.'

Helgi appears also to be designated as a Danish king when he and his men are called *siklingar* in I, 26; I, 46=II, 24. Helgi himself is called *siklingr* in II, 14, and from him the word is carried over to Helgi, son of Hjörvarth, in H. Hj., 29. The old Icelanders regarded it as a race-name,<sup>1</sup> and this view seems to me certainly correct, because of its use in the Helgi-poems in analogy with *Ylfingar*, *Völsungar*, *Döglingar*, etc.<sup>2</sup> In Snorri and in *Flateyjarbók*, it is said that *Siklingar* is the name of the race to which *Siggeirr*, who was married to *Völsung's* daughter *Signy*, and *Sigar*, who had *Hagbarth* hanged, belonged; and in *Flateyjarbók* *Siggeir's* father is called *Sigar*. This too is, in my

<sup>1</sup> See Snorri's *Edda*, I, 522; *Flateyjarbók*, I, 25.

<sup>2</sup> For the reasons above given I cannot accept Noreen's explanation of *siklingr* in *Uppsala studier*, p. 196. He explains the word as a derivative of a \**sikell*, -*oll*, which would correspond to A.S. *sicol*, O.H.G. *sikhila*, and which probably is to be seen in Icel. *sikolgjörð*. But the A.S. and O.H.G. words mean always 'sickle' (never 'sword'), and *siklingr* could not be drawn from a corresponding O.N. word because of its meaning. Moreover, *sikul-gjörð* is more correctly written *svikulgjörð*, Sn. Ed., I, 496; II, 599, and at any rate cannot be shown to have had anything to do with A.S. *sicol*. Further, A.S. *sicol* and O.H.G. *sikhila* may be loan-words from Latin.

opinion, correct, for *Siklingar* (which may earlier have been pronounced with the main accent on the second p. 129. syllable) appears to have had its origin in \**Siggeir-lingar*.<sup>1</sup> But the saga-king Sigr is connected with Denmark.<sup>2</sup> In Guðr., II, 16, Guthrún tells that she once was in Denmark (*i.e.* either in Zealand or Skaane), where a woman wrought figures in a piece of tapestry, representing the fights of Sigr and Siggeir in the south in Funen.<sup>3</sup> The Siklings, who were originally a royal race different from the Shieldings, are connected with Zealand in many ways.<sup>4</sup> Except in Saxo, they are not, however, mentioned in the old Danish royal genealogies among the kings of Denmark. The

<sup>1</sup> This explanation is supported by homogeneous forms. Egil Skallagrimsson calls Arinbjörn (in *Arinbjarnarkviða*, 19): *vinr Vêþorms Veklinga tgs*. Here *Vêþorms* must mean son of *Vêgeirr* in Sogn (*Landnámabók*, II, 29; *Íslendigasögur*, I, 149). The word *Veklingar*, hitherto unexplained, had thus its origin in \**Vêgeir-lingar*. *Otleiff* (*Dipl. Norw.*, I, No. 1049—Year 1516); *Autleiff* (I, No. 1050—Year 1516) is, according to the Register to *Dipl. = Oddleifr. Eklaunus (Hermann)* (*Script. r. Dan.*, VIII, 241 f—Year 1328) seems to come from *Eggdôfr* (or, is *Eklaunus* borrowed from English?). In *Heimskringla, Hák. s. g.*, chap. 13 (F. J.) we read: *en áðr var jólahald hafit hokunótt, þat var miðsvetrar-nótt*. Cod. Fris. has *hoggonótt*. *Hokunótt* comes from *hoggunótt*, 'the night when one slays (animals for sacrifices)'. The word presupposes a subst. *hoggva*, formed as *taka*, *trúa*, Gothic *brinnō*, etc. *Hopelstadhum*, Red Book, p. 90 = *Habolstadhum*, pp. 87, 92, *Hobilstadae*, p. 209, now *Hobbelstad*, Gaard-Nr. 100 and 101 in Övre Eker; *Hobplstadom*, Red Book, p. 38, now *Hoppestad* in Gjerpen Gaard-Nr. 12. The passing over of *gg* into *k* after a vowel with secondary accent before the chief accent is to be seen in the following word used as a Norwegian place-name: O.N. *hégeitill*, pronounced *Hikjellen* or *Hikkjellen*, with chief accent on the second syllable.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Sv. Grundtvig, *Dann. gl. Folkev.*, I, 259.

<sup>3</sup> *Fjóni*, as the Völs. saga has it, appears to be the right reading.

<sup>4</sup> Olrik, *Sakser Oldhist.*, II, 230-249.



ancestor of the race was, according to Saxo, Yngun or Yngvin (Unguinus).<sup>1</sup>

It was not until later that *siklingr* came to be used in poetic language to signify a king in general, and this meaning was probably largely due to the use of the word in the Helgi-lays.

The chief event described in the First Lay is the war between Helgi and Høthbrodd. In order to follow the history of the story, it is important to determine if possible what names mentioned as the scenes of this p. 130. warfare are the names of actual places. We have already seen that in the poem, as in Saxo, Helgi is designated as a king of Denmark; and in the closing strophe we learn that not until Høthbrodd had fallen could Helgi occupy unopposed Ringsted, the royal seat which his father had given him at his birth. We see, therefore, that in the war with Høthbrodd, Helgi was defending the kingdom of Denmark. The sea over which Helgi sails against his enemy, must then have been thought of by the poet as Danish, and the decisive battle which took place in Høthbrodd's land must have been in one of the lands which border on Denmark.<sup>2</sup>

Several place-names in the Helgi-lays show that the sea which the hero traversed was the Baltic.

When Helgi's fleet assembles, men come to him in hundreds from *Heðinsey* (I, 22). This island is men-

<sup>1</sup> Olrik, *Saksas Oldhist.*, I, 100; cf. I, 108.

<sup>2</sup> *Varinsfjgrðr*, from which Helgi sails with his fleet against Høthbrodd's land, cannot therefore, as Vigfusson thought (*The Place of the Helgi-Lays*, in Grimm Centenary, Oxford, 1886, pp. 29 ff), be the sea about the islands in the British Channel, Guernsey, and the others.

tioned frequently in documents relating to early times in Scandinavia, and it certainly must be the island of *Hiddensee*, just west of Rügen, from which it was not completely separated until 1308. *Heðinsey* as a name of Hiddensee occurs frequently in the *Knytlinga Saga* in the story of the wars waged by Valdemar the First and Absalon against the Wends.<sup>1</sup> Saxo too, in his account of this war, names often *Hythini insula*.<sup>2</sup> Hiddensee was, says N. M. Petersen,<sup>3</sup> the place to which the Danish fleet generally went first; for in the sound between the island and Rügen it had a sort of refuge and reconnoitring station. It was peculiarly suitable for this purpose, because it had a harbour on the eastern side.

p. 131. In his account of Frotho III., Saxo makes Hogni (Höginus) and Hethin (Hithinus) fight with each other in Hethin's isle (*apud insulam Hithinsø*).<sup>4</sup> We may feel confident that it is Hiddensee, near Rügen, which is meant; for Saxo has already said that Hethin was collecting taxes among the Wends (*Hithinum, regia apud Sclavos stipendia colligentem*). It seems to have been in Denmark that the localisation of this battle in Hiddensee was decided upon.<sup>5</sup>

When our poet represents numerous companies of men from *Heðinsey* as supporting Helgi, we seem to have an indication that he imagines the Danish king either to have had himself a firm foothold on the coasts of Wendland, or to have had allies there.

<sup>1</sup> *Fornmannasgur*, xi, 374, 378, 382 f.

<sup>2</sup> Müller's edition, pp. 746, 751, 929, 970.

<sup>3</sup> *Ann. f. n. Oldk.*, 1836-37, p. 220.

<sup>4</sup> Saxo, Bk. v, p. 242.

<sup>5</sup> A. Olrik, *Saksnes Oldhist.*, 11, 192.

The mention of Hiddensee in the lay makes it probable that the poet thought of the war between Helgi and Høthbrodd as taking place in the Baltic and on the Wendish coasts. This helps us to an explanation of other names of places in the poem.

Some of the ships which are to join Helgi's fleet sail in to *Orvasund* (I, 24). This name means 'sound of arrows'; and I take it to be a translation of *Strelasund*, *Stralsund*, the sound which separates Rügen from the mainland, and on which the town of Stralsund now lies. The sound got its name from the island of *Strela* in the *Knyttlinga Saga* called *Stræla*, now Dänholm, to the south-east of Stralsund—an island often mentioned in accounts of the Wendish wars. Mid. Low Ger. *stråle*, *strål*, A.S. *strêl*, means 'an arrow,' so that *Stralsund*, when one did not think of the island *Strela*, could be translated into O.N. by *Orvasund*. How easy this translation was, becomes evident when we observe that the coat-of-arms of the town of Stralsund in the Middle Ages was *ein strål* (an arrow).<sup>1</sup>

The poet describes how the sails were hoisted on p. 132. Helgi's ships in Varinsfjord (*á Varinsfirði*, I, 26). This place also was probably on the Wendish coast. Since

<sup>1</sup> It was not unusual in O.N. to translate foreign names, and also names of places. I have given examples of this custom in my *Studien über die Entstehung der nord. Götter- u. Heldensagen*, I, 134 f (Norw. ed., pp. 128 f). The name *Livius* was translated by 'the envious' (*hinn ofund-sjúki*, *ofundsami*); *Sicoris*, the name of a river in Spain in Lucan's *Pharsalia*, I, 14, by 'the secure' (*þruga*), as if the name came from *securus*. Even in the land of the Wends, there were two place-names which were translated by Norsemen: *Kamin* (cf. Pol. *Kamień*, 'stone') was called by the Icelanders *Steinborg*; and *Stettin* (cf. Pol. *szczecina*, 'a brush') corresponds to Icel. *Burstaborg*. See N. M. Petersen, *Annaler*, 1836-37, p. 240.



we see in what follows that Helgi sails westwards, I am of the opinion that in *Varinsfjörðr* the poet thought of the fjord at the mouth of the river now called the *Warnow*, near the place now known as *Warnemünde*. At Warnow there lived in the eleventh and twelfth centuries the Slavic people *Warnabi* (Adam of Bremen), *Warnavi* (Helmold). Their land was called *Warnouwe*.<sup>1</sup>

The poet makes Sinfjötli say to Guthmund in the word-combat between them (I, 37): 'thou wert a *völva* (sibyl, prophetess) in *Varinsey*.' And the Norse author of the lay on Hrimgerth and Atli makes the witch say to Helgi Hjörvarthsson's watchman (H. Hj., 22): 'Atli! go thou into the land, if thou art confident of thy strength, and let us meet *i vík Varins*.' The names 'Varin's Isle' and 'Varin's Bay' were formed in imitation of 'Varin's Fjord (*Varinsfjörðr*)' by the Norwegian poet himself, who probably had never been in that fjord.

Thus in order to determine where the poet thought that the lands of Høthbrodd and the other sons of Granmar lay, we have, as it seems, the following facts: (1) that men come in hundreds to Helgi from Hidden-see; (2) that numerous ships, which set out to join Helgi, sail into the sound near Stræla or Dänholm; and (3) that the collected fleet sails out afterwards from Warnemünde. The poet therefore represents Helgi as collecting his fleet on the southern coast of the Baltic.

p. 133. We learn from the First Lay the direction in which

<sup>1</sup> See Zeuss, *Die Deutschen*, pp. 652 f; N. M. Petersen, *Annaler*, 1836-37, p. 209.

Helgi is thought by the poet to have sailed to Høthbrodd's land. When Helgi has come to the country where Granmar's sons live, Sinfjötli, Helgi's brother, says to one of Høthbrodd's brothers that the latter can tell that 'the Wolfings have come *from the east*' (I, 34). This expression, in connection with the place-name previously given, shows us that the poet represents Helgi's expedition against Høthbrodd as sailing along the southern coast from Rügen westwards, and that it was near the south-western end of the Baltic that he imagined Høthbrodd's land to lie.

When Helgi's ships, after their voyage, have come into harbour in the hostile land, the men ('they themselves') from Svarin's Hill (*þeir sjálfir frá Svarinshaugi*, I, 31) look out over the fleet. On this statement is based the following remark in the prose bit after st. 13 in the Second Lay (p. 193 a): 'Granmar was the name of a mighty king who dwelt at Svarin's Hill (*at Svarinshaugi*).' Since the poet represents Helgi's fleet as sailing from the east (H. H., I, 34), and since he imagined Varinsfjord, the place from which the fleet has last sailed, as near Warnemünde, we must naturally seek for Svarin's Hill in the south-western part of the Baltic. The place which the poet seems to have had in mind is *Zuerin*,<sup>1</sup> *Suerinum*, in the land of the Obotrits, now *Schwerin*, which is mentioned as a castle of the Wends as early as the first half of the eleventh century. The word *haugi* in the compound *Svarinshaugi*

<sup>1</sup> Cf. N. M. Petersen, *Annales f. nord. Oldk.*, 1836-37, p. 207. The name has been explained as a derivative of Old Slavic *svěrl*, 'wild animal.' The foreign form *Swerin* could have been changed into O.N. *Svarinn* just as the O.N. man's-name *Varinn* corresponds to O.S. *Werin*.

*haugi* may refer to the forest-covered heights near Schwerin.<sup>1</sup>

- p. 134. Saxo mentions an Earl *Svarinus*, whose name is connected with *Svarinshaugi*; of him I shall speak later. Tacitus (*Germania*, 40) names among the Germanic peoples who worshipped Nerthus or Mother Earth, between the *Eudoses* and the *Nuithones*, a people whose name in most editions is given as *Suardones*. Zeuss (pp. 154, 476) places these on the coast of the Baltic, between the Trave and the Oder,<sup>2</sup> Much<sup>3</sup> somewhat further north. In Much's map they are placed in the region south of the present Aalborg. The MSS. BCc have *Suarines*; over this in b, *done*s was written by corrector β. It is perhaps possible that the Helgi-poet got *Svarinshaugi* from an older Danish poem, and that in the beginning the name was not brought into connection with Schwerin, but was a poetic representative of Svarines.

I have conjectured that when the author of the First Helgi-lay mentioned *Varin's* Fjord, he thought of the fjord near Warnemünde, where the Slavic *Varnavi* dwelt. It is not, however, improbable that he took the name from an older Danish Helgi-poem, and this name may then at first have been understood as the name of a fjord in the land of the Germanic *Varini*. To support this suggestion, we have the fact that the A.S. poem *Widsið* brings Varns and Vikings into connection with

<sup>1</sup> The name *Sparinsheiðr*, in 1, 51, resembles *Parin*, the name of an allodial property in Mecklenburg-Schwerin, not far from Grevesmühlen. I regard this likeness as accidental, and hold to my opinion that *Sparinsheiðr* is based on *Sparta*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Müllenhoff, in *Ztsch. f. d. Alt.*, xi, 286 f.

<sup>3</sup> Sievers's *Beiträge*, xvii, 211-213.

one another (*mid Wærnum and mid Wicingum*, l. 50), where the Varns are without any doubt the Germanic people which Procopius mentions in his account of the expedition of the Erulians northwards, as dwelling south of the Danes, and where the Vikings must (as in *Widstð*, 47) designate Ingeld's people, the Heathobards. The fact that the Varns are named in an A.S. poem along with the Heathobards, suggests that Varin's Fjord, hard by Høthbrodd's land (*i.e.*, as we shall see later, the land of the Heathobards), was originally thought of as a fjord in the land of the Germanic *Varini*. The personal name *Varinn*, which occurs p. 135. in ancient stories both in Norway and in Sweden, should also be explained by the name of the Germanic tribe.

In determining the scene of the wars between Høthbrodd and Helgi, the name of one more place deserves notice. In H. H., I, 46, Helgi says of Granmar's sons:

*þeir hafa markat  
á 'móins heimom,'  
at hug hafa  
hjörum at bregða.*

'They have shown at Móinshome (at Móin's dwelling-places) that they have courage to swing swords.' Since the poet imagined that the scene of the battles between Helgi and Granmar's sons was the Wendish coast eastward as far as Rügen and the Danish coast opposite, together with the sea between these coasts, I cannot but think that by

*á Móinsheimum*<sup>1</sup> he meant 'on *Mön*.' We should note that in *Móins* the older form in two syllables is preserved.<sup>2</sup>

In Abildgaard's description of *Mön*'s cliff, he states (p. 2) that on *Mön* the words *Mo*, *Mojord* are used as names of whitish, thin marl and chalky earth, with which the peasants whitewash their houses. *Mo*, *Mojord*, *Molér* are used also in many other parts of Denmark.<sup>3</sup> By this *Mo* Abildgaard explains the name of the island *Mön*; and this explanation has been further developed and supported by Dyrland and O. Nielsen.<sup>4</sup> They explain *Mön* as coming from *Móvin*, and refer to *Mæn*, the name of a Norwegian country-seat (*gaard*), which occurs twice and has its origin in *Mó-vín*,<sup>5</sup> although, indeed, in this compound, *mór* has a different meaning.

This explanation of *Mön* as originally \**Mó-vín* is supported by *Móinsheimum* in the Helgi-lay.<sup>6</sup> In

<sup>1</sup> The editors of the phototype edition (p. 42, l. 12) read *heio*. Where this word recurs in H. H., II, 24, the ms. has *a. m. r.*, by which, if written in full, the scribe probably meant *á* (or *at*) *móins reino*, from *rein*, a strip of land.

<sup>2</sup> Except when in combination, the name of the island did not form a genitive in *-s*. Possibly the O.N. poet inserted the gen. form *Móins*, in accordance with the name of the serpent *Móinn* in *Grím.* 34. Yet with reference to the gen. form in *-s* in combination with a name originally united with *vin*, cf. O.N. *Hæns Kirkja*, *Féns Kirkja*, and the like (see *Arkiv*, VII, 263 f). Cf. also *Hísingsbúlar* = *Hísingbúlar*; O.N. *hjálpsmaðr* = Old Icel. *hjálparmaðr*.

<sup>3</sup> See Molbech's *Dansk Dialekt-Lexikon*, p. 362.

<sup>4</sup> The former in *Arkiv*, XI, 183; the latter in a private communication.

<sup>5</sup> See O. Rygh in *Arkiv*, VII, 246, and *Trondhjemske Gaardnavne*, II, 243.

<sup>6</sup> Adam of Bremen calls the island *Moyland*. This seems to have been originally *Moynland*, and to point to a two-syllable form, *Móyn*. In the *Ky-Year-books* (Pertz, *Scriptores*, XVI, 392) we have *Moen*.



an attack on the realm of the Danish king from the Wendish coast near Stralsund, it was natural that a battle should take place in Mön.<sup>1</sup> According to Saxo (Bk. XIV, p. 742), Absalon sails from the open sea by Rügen back to *Mönensium portus*. This shows that in the time of Valdemar I. there was a well-known harbour at Mön.<sup>2</sup> Saxo also says (Bk. XIV, p. 874) that the fleet of the Wends which lay *Swaldensi in portu*, planned to sail to Mön, to land cavalry on the south coast of the island, foot-soldiers on the north coast, and then to have the ships enter *Kyalbyensis sinus anfractibus* (now Stege Nor). The Valdemar era appears, therefore, to throw light on the naming of the battle *d Mbinsheimum* between Helgi and the sons of Granmar.

We have thus found that the First Helgi-lay mentions places on the southern coast of the Baltic and in Mön. This proves that the poem was not composed in Greenland or in Iceland. It also makes it less probable p. 137. that it was composed by a Norwegian in Norway.<sup>3</sup>

Several personal names in the account of the war with Høthbrodd in the First Lay appear to be borrowed from the Danish story of the Shieldings.

The young *Hjorleifr*, who accompanies Helgi in his

<sup>1</sup> After my explanation of *Mbinsheimar* was written down, I saw that Bergmann (*Die Eddagedichte der nord. Heldensage*, pp. 61, 121, 212) explains the name by Mön. Much, in *Ztsch. f. d. Alt.*, xxxiii, 1, explains the word by 'the Maine,' O.H.G. *Möin*; but this does not agree with the surroundings in which the war with Granmar's sons takes place.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. N. M. Petersen, *Ann. f. n. Oldk.*, 1836-37, pp. 242 f.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. A. Olrik, *Saksens Oldhist.*, 1, 23: 'No Icelandic accounts of the Shielding-story tell of battles in Germany, and the contact with Germany in other old stories (*Hervararsaga*, *Asmundarsaga kappabana*) are insignificant, and do not bear in the least the impress of a national war.'

expedition (I, 23), seems to be identical with *Herleifr*, who in the *Skjöldungasaga*, as Arngrim Jónsson testifies,<sup>1</sup> is named as a son of Frotho I. Names in *Her-* and *Hjor-* are frequently interchangeable;<sup>2</sup> and we have probable evidence that the name-form *Herleifr* occurred earlier in the Helgi-lay, where our MS. has the acc. *hiorleif*. Saxo reproduces in Latin the names of the warriors who took part in the Brávalla-battle, his authority for these names being the original Brávalla-poem, which was probably composed towards the end of the eleventh century by an Icclander who had Norway, and especially Telemarken, in his mind. In Harald's army are mentioned as coming from Hadeland (in the interior of southern Norway): 'Har atque *Herlewar* cum Hothbroddo cui Effreni cognomen.'<sup>3</sup> Moreover, in the reproduction of the poem in the fragment of the *Skjöldungasaga*, *Herleifr* is named. It looks as if the author of the Brávalla-poem knew the First Helgi-lay and took from it the names *Herleifr* and *Hǫðbroddr*. Because of the first part of the latter name he referred them to Hadeland, to which *Hoddbroddr* is referred in *Flateyjarbók*, I, 24.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See A. Olrik in *Aarb. f. n. Oldk.*, 1894, pp. 85, 107. In *Sakses Oldhist.*, II, 273, Olrik expresses the opinion that the Icelanders themselves made up this *Herleifr*, whose name they alone knew.

<sup>2</sup> The same person is called in *Sögubrot (Fornaldarsögur)*, I, 375) *Hervarðr Ylfingr*, and in *Ynglingasaga* (ed. F. J., chaps. 37-39) *Hjervarðr Ylfingr*. In H. H., I, 14, Cod. reg. has *Hiorvarð*, where *Völsungasaga* has *Hervarð*.

<sup>3</sup> See A. Olrik in *Arkiv*, X, 229, 224.

<sup>4</sup> One of the lines in the Brávalla-lay may have run: *Hǫðbroddr grimur* (cf. *grimmur*, H. H., I, 18) or *H. berserkr* (cf. *Flat.*, I, 24, where *Hoddbroddr* is grandfather of *Rómundr berserkr*). It may be that *Har* is a corruption of *Hǫðr* (*Hauðr*), who is named in *Flat.*, I, 24, as father of *Hoddbroddr*.

Further on in the Helgi-lay, we have other personal names which seem to belong to the story of the Shieldings. When Høthbrodd sends out messengers to get help, he says (I, 52):

*Bjōððið ér Hōgna  
ok Hrings sonum,  
Atla ok Yngva,  
Olfr ennum gamla !*

'Carry messages to Hōgni and the sons of Hring, to Atli and Yngvi, to Alf the old!' In the *Skjöldungasaga* we are told that Hring (Ringo, or Sigvardus Ringo), who was King of Denmark and Sweden, was married to Alfhild, daughter of King Gandalf of Raumarike in southern Norway, a descendant of Alf the old (*Alfr enn gamle*). After her death Hring, in his old age, met in Sciringssal (in southern Norway) Alf and Yngvi, King Alf's sons from Vendel, and their sister Alfsol, whom he wooed in vain.<sup>1</sup> It seems certain that there is connection between these names and the names of Hring's sons, Yngvi and Alf the old, in the Helgi-lay. The names in the lay were probably taken from the *Skjöldungasaga*.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Fornaldarsögur*, I, 387 f; Olrik, *Aarb. f. nord. Oldk.*, 1894, pp. 93 f, 129-132, 146 f.

<sup>2</sup> On the Zealander Ringo, in Saxo's story of Gram, see what follows. The Brávalla-lay, 15 (see Olrik, p. 231), has *Hringr Atlasun* (in Saxo, *Ring Athylae filius*), who, the poet seems to think, came from the south-east of Norway. It is very uncertain whether these names are borrowed from the Helgi-lay. In Hyndl., 12 and 18, occurs *Alfr enn gamli* in a different connection from that in H. H., I, and in the *Skjöldungasaga*. Ring was perhaps to some extent thought of as an eponym for Ringsted. Ringo as a name of Sigurd Ring, on the contrary, appears to be a translation of Adam of Bremen's *Anulo*. With reference to other persons, the name *Hringr* has been brought into connection with *Hringarki*; cf. J. Jónsson in *Arkiv*, x, 130 ff.



## XII

HELGI HUNDINGSBANI IN SAXO AND IN THE  
EDDIC POEMS.

p. 139. THERE are some sure bonds of union between Helgi, son of Sigmund, in the Edda, and Saxo's Danish King Helgi, son of Halfdan. Of these the plainest is the fact that both are called 'Helgi, the slayer of Hunding and Hothbrodd.'<sup>1</sup> But it is difficult to settle definitely the historical relations between the two accounts, Saxo's and that of the Edda. Saxo names neither Sigmund, Borghild, and Sinfjötli, nor Sigrún and her father Hogni in connection with Helgi. Since, now, Sigmund and Sinfjötli at any rate, and possibly also others of the persons named, did not originally stand in connection with the Helgi-story, we have reason to believe that the form of the story of Helgi the slayer of Hunding and Hothbrodd which Saxo learned, had not taken up the persons named, and that to this extent this form of the story presented an older stage than the Helgi-poems as preserved in the Edda.<sup>2</sup> Saxo knew, however (like the Eddic poems), that Helgi waged war against Hothbrodd and killed him; but this war is not carried on in Saxo (as in the Edda, with the exception of H. H., II, 19-24) for Sigrún's sake nor even against Sigrún's father, Hogni. And

<sup>1</sup> H. H., I, has the heading: *her hefr vþ qveþi fra helga hundings bana. þeira oc h.* (i.e. *hauþbrodds*); see the photo-lithographic edition. In Saxo (ed. Müller, p. 82) we read of Helgo: 'Quo evenit, ut cui nuper ob Hundingi caedem agnomen incesserat, nunc Hothbrodi strages cognomentum inferret.'

<sup>2</sup> This is also the opinion of Jessen, *Über die Eddalieder*, pp. 22 f.

since Saxo's form (in agreement with H. H., II, 20-21) represents an older stage in the development of the story in that it does not know Sigrún and does not p. 140. make Helgi war against Høthbrodd for Sigrún's sake, we have positive grounds for holding that his account of the war between Helgi and Høthbrodd contains older elements which were driven out of the story in the Edda by the intrusion of the Sigrún-motive.

I cannot, therefore, accept Olrik's theory that Saxo's account of this war does not really refer to Høthbrodd, and that the name *Hrókr*<sup>1</sup> or *Hrærikr* in Saxo was incorrectly replaced by that of Høthbrodd.

Saxo tells (p. 82) that King Høthbrodd of Sweden, after undertaking an expedition against the Baltic provinces in order to extend his power, attacked Denmark. He fought with Roe in three battles and slew him in the last. When Helgi heard of this, he shut up his son Hrólf in the castle of Leire, to keep him out of danger. Then he had his men go about in the cities and kill the commanders whom Høthbrodd had placed there. He afterwards conquered Høthbrodd's whole army in a sea-fight in which Høthbrodd himself fell. Thus Helgi revenged his brother's death and what his kingdom had suffered.

The points in which the account in Saxo and that in the Edda agree, may in all probability be regarded as saga-features which belonged to an older form of the story of Helgi Hundingsbani, a form which was the common source of both accounts. These features

<sup>1</sup> That *Hrókr* in *Hrólfssaga Kraka* is the same saga-figure as *Hrærikr Slöngvanbaugi*, I have, I think, shown in my *Studien*, I, 171 f (Norw. ed., pp. 164 f).

may be stated thus: Helgi Hundingsbani was a Danish king. Høthbrodd, a foreign king, acts in a hostile manner towards one of Helgi's nearest relatives, and thereby forces Helgi to attack him with a fleet. Helgi conquers the whole of Høthbrodd's army, and kills Høthbrodd.

In other traditions also, the Shielding Helgi is said to have been a king who set out on a naval expedition. p. 141. Saxo represents the war against Høthbrodd as undertaken by Helgi in defence of the Danish kingdom; in slaying Høthbrodd Helgi avenges what the fatherland has suffered (*patriae injuriam*). In the last strophe of the First Helgi-lay, Sigrún says to Helgi, who has slain Høthbrodd: 'Hail, thou king! thou shalt unopposed possess both Høgni's daughter and Ringsted, victory and lands'; and Ringsted (*Hringstaðir*) is here named as Helgi's royal seat. We thus see that the Eddic poem also represents the war against Høthbrodd as a war which the Danish king wages against a foreign king in defence of Denmark and its royal seat. This seems, then, to have been the account given in the story which was the source of both Saxo and the Eddic Lay.

Therefore, notwithstanding the fact that the First Helgi-lay was composed in a later time than certain strophes of 'The Old Lay of the Völsungs' and strophes in the last part of the Second Helgi-lay, it seems in some respects to preserve an older form of the story; for it represents Høthbrodd as Helgi's real opponent. In this older form (as in the First Lay) Høgni stood quite in the background in the war which resulted in Helgi's victory. We may say, in fact, that (if we

except the strophes in the Second Lay which contain the word-combat between Sinfjötli and Guthmund) the First Helgi-lay is not really a working-over of the older extant Helgi-verses, although the author knew and was influenced by these, but a working-over of a lost poem, which stood in connection with a Danish Helgi-lay composed (as I shall prove later) in Britain. The verses (II, 19-22) which contain the word-combat appear to be a remnant of this lost poem.

In one more particular there is connection between the Høthbrodd-story in the Edda and that in Saxo. In I, 55, Høthbrodd is designated as 'the king who caused Ægir's death' (*jefur þann er olli | 'egis' dauða*). This is p. 142. made clearer by what Saxo says (Bk. II, p. 81) of Helgi, after he had slain Hunding: *Jutiae Saxonibus ereptae jus procurationemque Hescae, Eyr et Ler ducibus commisit*. N. M. Petersen and A. Olrik have seen<sup>1</sup> that *Eyr*=Icel. *Ægir*, just as *Eydora* in Saxo=Icel. *Ægidyr*. It is evidently the same Ægir who is named in the First Helgi-lay. The account in Saxo is easily fitted to that in the Eddic Lay, if we suppose that Helgi, according to the more original form of the story, appointed Ægir after Hunding's fall to protect Jutland against its enemies, and that Ægir was later killed by Høthbrodd.<sup>2</sup>

The Jutland chieftain called by Saxo *Ler* has the same name as the old Icel. *Hlér*. Him we may regard as

<sup>1</sup> The former in *Danm. Hist.*<sup>1</sup>, I, 395; the latter in *Saksas Oldhist.*, I, 83.

<sup>2</sup> Therefore the word in I, 55, cannot be taken to be *agis* 'of the terrifying chieftain.'

the representative of *Hlésey* (*Læssø*) in the epic poem. In the Second Lay (in its extant form, at any rate) Helgi is brought into connection with *Læssø*; for, after Hunding's death, he says to Sigrún (II, 6): 'Our home is in *Læssø*.' The statement which Saxo took from an older epic poem, that Helgi committed Jutland to the charge of the chieftain *Ler*, practically means that Helgi had a fleet lying at *Læssø* to defend Jutland from an attack by sea.

As *Ler* is a representative of *Læssø*, so *Ægir* (Saxo's *Eyr*) is a representative of *Ægidyr*, *Egidora*, *Eider*. The statement in the epic poem that Helgi intrusted Jutland to the charge of the chieftain *Ægir*, simply means that Helgi stationed troops at *Eider* to defend Jutland against a land attack from the south.<sup>1</sup>

p. 143. The third earl, *Hesca*, whose name has hitherto not been explained, must then in like manner be a repre-

<sup>1</sup> These observations were written before I saw the following sentences in Olrik's *Saksæ Oldhist.*, II: 'Among the names we meet *Eyr* and *Ler*, Saxo's way of pronouncing the old names *Ægir* and *Hlér*. It must have been well on in the Middle Ages before the giant-nature of these inhabitants of the sea was forgotten so that they could be transformed into Jutland earls' (p. 144). 'Several Jutish kings are perhaps concealed under [Saxo's] earls. The most striking cases are the first Jutish chieftains he mentions, viz. *Hesca*, *Eyr*, and *Ler*, the earls whom Helgi appoints to rule Jutland after its recovery from the Saxons; these earls have nothing to do in the Helgi-story, and their original giant-natures make them little fitted for a place there: are not *Ægir* and *Hlér*, the giants from *Eider* and *Læssø*, represented as the oldest kings of Jutland, just as the frost-giant *Snjo* is transformed into a Danish king . . . ?' (p. 298).

I have shown, I think, that *Ægir* and *Hlér* have something to do in the Helgi-story, and I see, moreover, no convincing reason for holding that these eponyms were regarded in the story as the earliest kings of Jutland. The sea-giant, on the contrary, was doubtless originally more than an eponym.



sentative of some Danish place. I take this place to be *Eskeberg*,<sup>1</sup> now Schelenborg, on the peninsula Hindsholm on Fünen. This property was in the possession of Marsk Stig in the thirteenth century. When a fleet from Saxony or Wendland wished to attack the northern part of Jutland, the nearest way was through the Great Belt. It was natural, therefore, for the Danish king to station a chieftain on Hindsholm to hinder a hostile fleet from reaching northern Jutland through that channel. This *Eska* appears, therefore, to show that Eskeberg in Hindsholm was a place of importance as early as the beginning of the eleventh century.

I find in the Helgi-poems another Danish eponym; but it occurs in the First Lay only, and is not found in Saxo. Helgi calls Høthbrodd 'the slayer of Ísung' (I, 20). This *Ísung* may be the poetic representative of *Isefjord*, including the principal place of assize p. 144. (*Thingsted*) of the Danish kingdom, *Isöre*, which lay at the mouth of Isefjord on its west side.<sup>2</sup> When the poet calls Høthbrodd Ísung's slayer, he means that the hostile king made a devastating expedition through the Isefjord against the royal seat of the Danish kingdom. Although Ísung is named in the First Lay only, he was certainly not invented by the author of that poem. Since Ísung is entirely analogous with *Eska*, *Ægir*, and *Hlér*, he was probably, like the others, carried over from an older poem on Helgi Hundingsbani.

<sup>1</sup> As regards the *h* in *Hesca*, we may compare in Saxo *Hesbernus* = *Esbernus*; *Hestia* = O.N. *Eistland*; *Hevindus* = O.N. *Eyvindr*; *Hþsathul* = O.N. *Eysgðull*, etc.

<sup>2</sup> See Henry Petersen, *Om Nordboernes Gudedyrkelse*, pp. 13-18.

There may well have been a pair of alliterating lines as follows:

*Ísungr, Eska*  
*Ægir ok Hlér.*<sup>1</sup>

Høthbrodd, who on one occasion killed Ísung, killed Ægir on another; that is to say, he went from the south with a hostile army into Denmark over Eider, after having vanquished the Danish guard on the border.

According to Saxo (Bk. II, p. 82 ff), Høthbrodd (Hothbrodus) was a Swedish king. He makes him the son of the Swedish king Regnerus and Suanhuita, and father of the Danish king Adisl (Atislus), Hrólf's contemporary, and of Hotherus.

That this account is at variance with the older story is evident from the fact that Adisl, in O.N. works, is said to be a son of Ottar; and this statement is clearly correct; for the Swedish king Éadgils in *Béowulf* is represented as a son of Óththere. Hothbrodus has then taken the place of Ottar as father of Adisl.

Saxo seems to have known Høthbrodd both from a Danish and an O.N. source.<sup>2</sup> It was from the latter that he knew him as son of the Swedish king Regnerus.  
p. 145. But, as I shall point out when we discuss the poem of Helgi, son of Hjörvarth, the story of Regnerus and Suanhuita was composed at a later date, and borrowed motives and names from the Helgi-lays. The designa-

<sup>1</sup> Ísung is otherwise explained by Müllenhoff in *Ztsch. f. d. Alt.*, XII, 351 f, and by Heinzel, *Ueber die Nibelungensage*, p. 20 [688].

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Olrik, *Saksnes Oldhist.*, II, 43.

tion of Høthbrodd as a Swedish king does not seem, therefore, to be based on any old story.

Granmar is the name of Høthbrodd's father in the story of Helgi Hund. Snorri<sup>1</sup> mentions a king in Sþødermanland called Granmar, who was married to Hild, daughter of King Høgni in East Gautland. This Granmar gets help in war from his father-in-law Høgni. The Helgi-lays tell of Høthbrodd, Granmar's son, whom Høgni assists in war, and to whom he promises his daughter's hand. Helgi says to Sigrún after the battle against Høthbrodd and Høgni: *Hildir hefir þú oss verit*, 'a Hild hast thou been to us.' These agreements, when taken in connection with the fact that the name Granmar does not occur elsewhere, seem to show that that Granmar whom Snorri makes King of Sþødermanland, was really the same saga-king as the Granmar of the Eddic poems.<sup>2</sup>

This same king is in *Sögubrot*<sup>3</sup> referred to East Gautland. There we read that Harald Hildetann 'set King Hjørmund, son of Hervarth Ylving, over East Gautland, which had been in the possession of his father and King Granmar.' The Hervarth Ylving here named is the same saga-king whom Snorri calls more correctly *Hjørvarðr Ylfingr* in the *Ynglingasaga* (37-39), where we are told that he became Granmar's son-in-law.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In the *Ynglingasaga* (ed. F. J., chaps. 36-39), possibly after the lost *Skjöldungasaga*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Heinzel, *Ueber die Nibelungensage*, p. 19 [687].

<sup>3</sup> *Fornaldarsögur*, 1, 375.

<sup>4</sup> Munch (*Norske Folks Hist.*, 1. 1, p. 228, note 4) says that the name Granmar seems best to belong to East Gautland.



We thus see that Høthbrodd and his kin, both according to Saxo and to Icelandic tradition, belong to Sweden. But that does not at all agree with the First Helgi-lay, for there Helgi sails *from the east* to Høthbrodd's home. The poet could not express himself thus if Høthbrodd's land, to which he represents the Danish king as coming, were Sþødermanland or East Gautland. Moreover, the account of Helgi's expedition with his fleet to Høthbrodd's land, as explained in what precedes, also shows that the poet did not represent this expedition as undertaken by a Danish king against Sþødermanland or East Gautland.

I have, I think, shown that the Helgi-poet represents the war between Helgi and Høthbrodd as follows: It is a war waged by the Danish king against enemies from the south who attack his kingdom. The home of Granmar's sons was in the south-western end of the Baltic Sea, in what is now Mecklenburg. Helgi sails against them from the east after having assembled his fleet at Rügen, and after having later sailed out of Warnemünde.

Moreover, the author of the First Lay was not alone in imagining Høthbrodd and Høgni as enemies who threatened the Danish king from the south. Sigrún is called in both the First and Second Lays *sudræn*, 'southern.'<sup>1</sup>

That Høthbrodd also was regarded in an older poem as a king who had his home south of Denmark is evident from the fact that he slays Ægir, *i.e.* the Danish border-guard at Eider; for Ægir is not a saga-

<sup>1</sup> F. Jónsson (*Litt. Hist.*, 1, 262) makes Sigrún Norwegian; but in so doing he has no support in the sources.

figure invented by the author of the First Lay: he is also mentioned in Saxo's account of Helgi.

We should note further that it is only in rather later Old Norse stories that Granmar and Hogni are referred to Sweden; and the same thing may be said of Hqthbrodd, since Saxo's statement that he was a Swedish king is based on a comparatively late account. We cannot believe that these localisations were originally present, for, as I hope to show more clearly in what follows, they are at variance with the oldest form of the saga. They are to be classed with other localisations p. 147. in later Scandinavian stories, where the action is transferred to places nearer to Norsemen and Icelanders. In the saga of the Shieldings, the Svertings are removed from Saxony to Sweden;<sup>1</sup> *Danparstaðir* from the south of Russia (River Dnieper) to Denmark; *Reiðgotaland* from the south of Europe to Scandinavia.

A similar removal can be pointed out in the case of *Svarin*.

Saxo (Bk. I, pp. 26-32), following an O.N. authority, hands down a story, with verses interlarded, about Gram. This tale has borrowed a series of motives and expressions from the different Lays of Helgi Hundingsbani.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Olrik, *Saksnes Oldhist.*, I, 23; cf. Steenstrup, *Arkiv*, XIII, 149 f, who holds the opposite opinion; but see Olrik's answer in *Arkiv*, xv, Heft 1.

<sup>2</sup> Many resemblances between the two stories are pointed out by Rydberg, *Undersökningar*, I, 136-140; but some of his resemblances are, in my opinion, based on wrong interpretations. Nor can I agree with Rydberg that Gram is identical with Helgi Hundingsbani, or that 'Halfdan's youthful exploits provided material which was freely worked over in the two Helgi-lays.' These seem to me, on the contrary, older than the Gram-story as we find it in Saxo.

Gram, son of the Danish king, begins war because he hears that Gro, daughter of the Swedish king Sigtrygg, is betrothed to a giant. Helgi begins war because he hears that Sigrún is betrothed to Høthbrodd, whom she hates as 'Cat's son.' Gram meets Gro, who is on horseback with other maidens. Sigrún comes with several maidens riding to Helgi. A versified conversation takes place between Gro and Gram's brother-in-arms, Besse. In H. H., II, 5-13, a conversation takes place between Sigrún and Helgi, who gives himself out to be his foster-brother. Svend Grundtvig was the first to see in some of the strophes in Saxo<sup>1</sup> a parallel to a couple of strophes in the Second Helgi-lay.

p. 148. In other places also the verses in Gram's saga, translated by Saxo, contain reminiscences of the Helgi-lays.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Gro's questions and the verses in the reply :

<i>Quis rogo vestrum</i>	<i>Hoc duce belli</i>
<i>dirigit agmen ?</i>	<i>signa levamus</i>
<i>quo duce signa</i>	<i>aurea, virgo !</i>
<i>bellica fertis ?</i>	

with H. H., II, 19 (Grundtvig compares II, 5-6) :

*Hverr er skjöldungr  
sá er skipum stýrir,  
lætr gunnfana  
gullinn fyr stafni ?*

'Who is the chieftain (Shielding) who guides the ships, raises the golden war-standard before the stern ?'

<sup>2</sup> With H. H., II, 30, *hildingum á hálsi stöð*, 'he trod upon the necks of kings,' cf. Saxo, p. 30 :

*Regum colla potentium  
victrici toties perdomui manu.*

With II. H., II, 40, *Hvært eru þat svik ein, er ek sjá þikkjómk, eða . . . ?* 'Is it a mere phantom that I think I see, or . . . ?' with Saxo, p. 27 :

*Conspicor . . .  
aut oculis fallor.*

Gram kills Gro's father, and marries Gro. Helgi kills Sigrún's father Høgni, and marries Sigrún. In Svarin's many brothers, who are all slain by the Danish king Gram, we must have an imitation of the many brothers of Høthbrodd, king of Svarinshaug, who are all slain by the Danish king Helgi.

Since the story of Gram has taken its names and incidents from the Helgi-stories, we cannot believe that in referring Svarin to Gautland (*Gothia*) it is following any independent old account.

And finally, when Saxo (I, 32) tells how a high-born Zealander, Ring(o), revolted against Gram and his father, but was conquered by them, the name Ring seems to have been introduced in that connection from p. 149. the First Helgi-lay, where Ring's sons are named among those whom Høthbrodd summons to help him against his opponents, and who must therefore have been conquered by Helgi.<sup>1</sup>

### XIII

#### THE ACCOUNT OF HELGI HUNDINGSBANI IN ITS RELATION TO ANGLO-SAXON EPICS.

ALL the Old Norse poems on Helgi Hund. represent him as king of Denmark. Now we know of but two Danish kings called Helgi who had their royal residence in Zealand;<sup>2</sup> and by far the more famous of

<sup>1</sup> Olrik's investigations in *Saksas Oldhist.* (I, in several places; II, 12), also make it clear that the Gram-story is later than the Helgi-lays.

<sup>2</sup> In *Sggubrot*, Helgi 'hvassi,' brother of Hrörek, is spoken of as king of Zealand.

these two is that Helgi who, in Icelandic sources, is son of the Shielding Halfdan, and brother of Hroar—in *Beowulf*, Hálga, son of Healfdene, and brother of Hrôthgâr. It is, then, natural to suppose that the historical prototype of Helgi Hund. is Helgi, brother of Hroar; or, at least, that from this historical Helgi the Helgi Hund. of the poems borrowed his name and position as king of Denmark, and occupant of a royal seat in Zealand.<sup>1</sup>

Saxo, moreover, confirms this theory. In his story of p. 150. Helgo (for which he used Danish, not O.N. material)<sup>2</sup> he identifies *Helgo Hundingi et Hothbrodi interemptor* with Helgo, brother of Roe, and father of Rólvo.

Axel Olrik, however, in the excellent study to which I have referred so often in this investigation, expresses the opinion that Helgi Hund. and the Shielding Helgi, son of Halfdan, are two entirely different saga-heroes. His first argument is: 'There is no agreement to be found except the name.' The facts that I have already adduced, and those that I shall adduce in what follows, will show, I trust, that this argument hardly holds good. I agree with Olrik in distinguishing two essentially different forms of the story; but I make the distinction between the more historical account, in which Helgi, son of Halfdan, is mentioned together with other Shielding kings, and the more poetic version, in

<sup>1</sup> Some scholars regard Helgi Hund. as a different saga-hero from Helgi, brother of Hroar—among others Müllenhoff, *Ztsch. f. d. Alt.*, xxiii, 128, and A. Olrik, *Saksas Oldhist.*, II, 144; *Aarb. f. n. Oldk.*, 1894, p. 161. On the other hand, Sijmons (Paul-Braune, *Beit.*, IV, 176 ff); Detter (Sievers, *Beit.*, xviii, 96-105), and Boer (Sievers, *Beit.*, xxii, 368 ff), think them identical.

<sup>2</sup> See Olrik, *op. cit.*, II, 142-146.

which Helgi, the slayer of Hunding and Høthbrodd, appears as the sole representative of the Shielding kings. Yet I do not deny that in the former Helgi's real life is altered and reconstructed, and that in the latter there are historical elements. In my opinion, Helgi Hund. never existed as a real personage, if he is not to be identified with Helgi, son of Halfdan.

It was, as I believe, in England that some Danish poet made over the story of Helgi, son of Halfdan, into that of Helgi Hund., basing his work, in all probability, partly on an Anglo-Saxon story of the Shieldings, and partly on the Danish Shielding-story. This work then seems to have suffered two fates: on the one hand, it was carried over into Denmark, where it was united with the Danish story of Helgi, son of Halfdan, and took the form of which we find fragments in Saxo; on the other hand, it was worked over by Norse poets in Britain, and several parts of the poems thus reconstructed are preserved in the Eddic lays.<sup>1</sup>

Our oldest authority for the history of the Danish Shieldings, viz. the A.S. epos, mentions the Heathobards (not Høthbrodd) as the enemies of Hroar, Helgi, and Hrolf. The Danes, after a long struggle against the Heathobards (*Heaðobeardna*, gen. of \**Heaðobeardan*), i.e. 'the warlike Bards,' finally defeat their opponents in a

<sup>1</sup> If we suppose in this way that the Helgi-saga was formed by a Danish poet in England, partly on the basis of an A.S. work, the theory that the Shielding Helgi, son of Halfdan, and Helgi, the slayer of Hunding and Høthbrodd, have the same historical prototype, is not refuted (as Olrik thinks, II, 144) by the fact that there are several documents, not merely Icelandic but also Danish, in which Helgi is not represented as the slayer of Hunding and Høthbrodd. p. 151.



bloody battle, in which Frôda, king of the Heathobards, was slain. In order to bring about permanent peace, Hrôthgâr, king of the Danes, son of Healfdene, and brother of Hâlgâ, gives his daughter in marriage to Ingeld, son of Frôda (*Beowulf*, 2225-30). But after a time Ingeld is egged on to revenge by an old warrior, and hostilities break out once more. In *Beow.*, 82 ff, it is predicted that, during Ingeld's attack in Hrôthgâr's old age, flames will ravage the Danish royal castle *Heorot*—i.e. Hart, which corresponds to the Norse *Hleidr*. According to *Widsið* (45-49), Hrôthulf and his uncle Hrôthgâr live long together as true friends after they have driven out the race of the Vikings, bent Ingeld's sword-point, and hewn asunder at Heorot the strength of the Heathobards. The war thus ends with the defeat of the Heathobards, which seems to have been decisive. We infer from *Beowulf* that Hrôthulf, or Hrôthwulf, is a son of Hrôthgâr's youngest brother Hâlgâ, that the latter dies early, and that Hrôthgâr afterwards cares for his brother's son.

The race to which Frôda and Ingeld belonged, were evidently represented in English tradition as the constant opponents of the kinsmen of Healfdene. In Scandinavian and especially in Icelandic tradition, p. 152, there are also stories of battles between Halfdan and the Shieldings of his race on the one side, and the kinsmen of Frothi and Ingjald on the other.<sup>1</sup> But in these Icelandic stories Frothi and Ingjald belong to another branch of the Shielding-race, while in the A.S. poem (which here certainly represents the original

<sup>1</sup> See especially A. Olrik, in *Aarb. f. nord. Oldk.*, 1884, pp. 158-162.



situation)<sup>1</sup> Frôda and Ingeld are kings of a neighbouring people.

There seems, moreover, to be a definite analogy between the wars with the Heathobards and those with Hôthbrodd: (1) In the A.S. poem, the Heathobards attack the Danish king Hrôthgâr, and his nephew Hrôthulf. In Saxo, Hôthbrodd attacks the Danish king Roe and his nephew Rolpho. (2) In the A.S. poem, the Heathobards direct their attack against the royal seat Heorot. In Saxo, Rolpho is guarded in the castle of Leire during the war with Hôthbrodd. (3) According to the *Skjoldungasaga*, as we know it from Arngrim Jónsson, Hroar survived Helgi, just as Hrôthgâr, according to A.S. tradition, survived Hálga. (4) In the *Skjoldungasaga*, Hroar is killed by Ingjald's sons, Rörik and Frodi. Since the A.S. poem states that the sons of Ingeld are Heathobards, we have here an additional agreement between the Heathobards and Hôthbrodd; for, according to Saxo, Roe is killed by Hôthbrodd. (5) Further, just as the fight with the Heathobards ends with their utter defeat, so the fight with Hôthbrodd, as described both in Saxo and in the Edda, ends with the complete defeat of Hôthbrodd. (6) In *Widsið*, the Heathobards are called Vikings; and we may, therefore, conclude that the conflict between the Danes and the Heathobards, like that between Helgi and Hôthbrodd, is carried on by sea-warriors. (7) From what Sinfjötli says in H. H., II, 20, it appears that Helgi has previously (*i.e.* before the expedition in which he slays Hôthbrodd) subdued the land belonging to Hôthbrodd's p. 153.

<sup>1</sup> Kögel seems to me to be mistaken in his ideas on this point; see *Gesch. der d. Lit.*, I, I, pp. 153-158.

race. There has, therefore, been a long feud between the two races. According to A.S. heroic saga, the Shieldings (*Scyldingas*) had won victories over the Heathobards before these latter were finally overthrown.

The conclusion seems to me inevitable: *Høthbrodd* is a poetic representative of 'the warlike Bards' (Heathobards).<sup>1</sup>

Since Scandinavian tradition with reference to the Shieldings has nowhere else preserved any memory of the name Heathobards, or of the fact that these kings, who fought with the people of Halfdan, belonged to a race different from that of the Danes, I am of the opinion that it was in imitation of the *Heaðobeardan* of English tradition that a Scandinavian poet (probably a Dane) in England invented *Høðbroddr* as the enemy of the Danish king. It was common in old Norse epic poetry to invent a saga-figure as the representative of a whole race, and to give him a name formed from that of the people which he represents.

The last part of the O.N. word *Høðbroddr* is not the same as that of the A.S. *Heaðobeardan*; but the two words sound so much alike that in the transformation of the story the one could easily replace the other, especially if this transformation was due to a poet who lived in England.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This opinion is vaguely suggested in my *Studien üb. die Entstehung der nord. Götter- u. Heldensagen*, trans. Brenner, 1889, I, 173 (Norw. ed., p. 166). Later, Boer also expressed the same view (Sievers, *Beit.*, XXII, 377 f.).

<sup>2</sup> To O.N. names in *-broddr* correspond English names in *-brord*; yet instead of *Wihtrord* we find also *Wihtrord*. Note also that the German hero *Sifrit* was called by the Danes *Sivard*, a name which was nearly the same in sound, but etymologically different.

The war between Helgi and Høthbrodd in the Helgi-lays had, then, its origin in the more historical war between the Danish Shieldings and the kings of the Heathobards as sung in A.S. epic verse.<sup>1</sup>

There is one difficult place in the Second Helgi-<sup>p. 154.</sup> lay which, when looked at from this point of view, loses its obscurity. As has already been said, the word-combat between Sinfjötli and Guthmund has preserved, fragmentarily, an older conception of the war between Høthbrodd and Helgi than that which appears elsewhere in the Eddic lays. Sinfjötli says to Høthbrodd's brother Guthmund: 'Here can Høthbrodd learn to know Helgi, the never-fleeing, in the midst of the fleet. He has subdued the native land of thy race, the inheritance of worse men (*Fjorsunga*, from A.S. \**wiersinga*). To this Guthmund answers (II, 21):

*því fyrr skulu  
at Frekasteini  
sáttir saman  
um sakar dæma;  
mál [kvæð] ek, Høðbroddr!  
hefnd at vinna,  
ef vér lægra hlut  
lengi bárum.*

<sup>1</sup> With Müllenhoff and most other scholars I regard the account of the battle with the Heathobards, in *Beowulf*, as historical. I cannot agree on this point with Detter, who expresses himself in one place as follows (Sievers, *Balt.*, xviii, 90-105): 'Müllenhoff geht . . . von der fassung der sage in *Béowulf* aus, wo ihre ursprüngliche gestalt bereits verwischt ist. Diese ist bei Saxo erhalten und hier weist alles auf einen mythus.' This theory gives too little heed to the mutual chronological relations of the sources. Moreover, a comparison of the account of Hygelác's expedition to the Franks and Frisians, in *Beowulf*, with entirely historic Frankish sources shows that Detter's conception of *Beowulf* is erroneous.

'The sooner shall those who have been reconciled with one another decide their disputes at Wolfstone. It is time, O Høthbrodd! to take revenge, if (since) we long have lain underneath.' The expression *sáttir saman*, 'those who have been reconciled with one another,'<sup>1</sup> p. 155. has not hitherto been understood, because it implies a more original conception of the war between Helgi and Høthbrodd than that which we find in the First Helgi-lay and in some verses of the Second. It is, however, explained by *Beowulf*, 2024 ff. The Shieldings have conquered the Heathobards and slain their king Frôda. Thereupon peace is made between the two peoples. The agreement is confirmed by oath; and, to make it still surer, the daughter of the Danish king Hrôthgâr is given in marriage to Ingeld, Frôda's son, the king of the Heathobards. The words in the Edda, 'those who have come to an agreement with one another,' refer to the people of Høthbrodd and those of Helgi, *i.e.* to the Heathobards and the Shieldings. Up to this time there has evidently been some agreement between them—the same agreement, doubtless, which is spoken of in *Beowulf* as confirmed by the marriage of Fréawaru with Ingeld. But the reconciliation between the kin of Helgi and the kin of Høthbrodd is preceded by Helgi's conquest of the land which Høthbrodd inherited from his fathers, and it is Høthbrodd's race who 'lie underneath' after the agreement is concluded. In replying to Sinfjötli's taunt that

<sup>1</sup> With *sáttir saman*, cf. Old Dan. and Old Swed. *samsæt*, 'reconciliation, agreement,' also O.N. *samsætt*; Old Dan. *samsættes*, O.N. *samsættaz*, 'to become reconciled with one another.' *Sáttir* in 11, 21, is subject, and does not belong to the predicate.



Helgi has subdued the inheritance of Guthmund's race, Guthmund admits that his race has long 'lain underneath'; 'but for that very reason,' he adds, 'there must soon come a battle: Høthbrodd (*i.e.* the Heathobards) must now revenge himself (themselves).'

Thus the *rôle* which Guthmund plays may be compared with that of the old warrior in *Béowulf* who, by constantly inciting the king of the Heathobards to take revenge on the Shieldings, brings about a rupture of the compact between the two nations.

It is important to note that it is in this form of the word-dispute between Sinfjötli and Guthmund (H. H., II, 20-21), which agrees more closely with the story as preserved in A.S. poetry than do the Helgi-lays in general, that we find the English loan-words to which I have already called attention—viz. *ēðli*, II, 20, *i.e.* A.S. *ēðle* from *ēðel*, 'native land,' and *fjersunga*, from A.S. *\*wiersinga*, 'of worse men.' From this we may p. 156. conclude that the strophes of the Second Helgi-lay here under discussion (20-21) are a working-over of A.S. verses which belonged to an epic poem on the war between the Shieldings and the Heathobards; also, that the word-combat between Guthmund and Sinfjötli is a working-over of a similar dispute between a Heathobard and a Dane.

We may add that in *Béow.*, 498 ff, we have also a word-combat (between Unferth and *Béowulf*); and that the situation in the Helgi-lay, when Guthmund asks what king it is who comes with a fleet to his land, resembles closely the situation in *Béow.*, 237 ff, where the Géats, who have come with their ships to Denmark,

are questioned as to their nationality by the watchers on the strand.

Høthbrodd's appearance in the Helgi-lay instead of the Heathobards is but one part of the transformation which the whole work underwent at the same time. It gave up its historical point of view and became a poem which dealt with a single ideal personality. This personality is Helgi, the ideal Danish king, who now stands alone, the other kings of Halfdan's race, named in the older English poem, having disappeared from the story.

I have already explained the designation of Høthbrodd as 'the slayer of Ísung' (H. H., 1), as a poetic phrase indicating that Høthbrodd had led a devastating expedition into the Isefjord. This agrees, as we can now see, with the statement in *Béowulf*, that the Heathobards attacked the Danish royal seat.

We perceive also that Granmar, as a name for Høthbrodd's father, is not historical. Possibly *Granmarr* was invented by the poet to designate the old king, being formed from *gránn*,<sup>1</sup> 'grey.' *Granmarr*,  
 p. 157. 'the grey one,' may, indeed, be a translation of *Frôða*, which is the name in the A.S. poem of the old king of the Heathobards, the father of Ingeld; for A.S. *frôð* may mean 'old.'

The fact that, of all the Shieldings, it was Helgi, and not Hrólf (Hrôthulf) or Hroar (Hrôthgâr), who in the Scandinavian heroic story developed in England became the ideal representative of the Danish kings, may possibly be partly due to his name, which desig-

<sup>1</sup> The long *d* may have been shortened in *Granmarr*, as e.g. Icel. *Rundólfr* from *rún*.

nates the man who, being consecrated to the gods, is inviolable.

King *Starkaðr* is mentioned in H. H., II, 27, among those who fall on the side of Granmar's sons; and from the prose bit between 13 and 14 we learn that he is Hǫthbrodd's brother. In the poem he is called 'the fiercest of kings, whose body fought after the head was off.'<sup>1</sup>

Svend Grundtvig<sup>2</sup> has already compared this feature with what Saxo tells of the giant Starkath, whose head bit the grass after having been hewn off. But the connection between the two Starkaths is closer than he supposed.

In Scandinavia the old warrior Starkath is represented as King Ingjald's foster-father, who induces Ingjald to repudiate his wife, a woman of a hostile race, and to revenge his father's death. But it was long ago pointed out that this Starkath of the Scandinavian Ingjald-story corresponds to the 'old (spear-armed) warrior' (*æsc-wiga*) who, in *Béow.*, incites Ingeld, king of the Heathobards, to revenge his father's death on the Danes, whose king is his wife's father.<sup>3</sup> The king Ingjald, or Ingeld, to whom Starkath is attached as champion, was thus originally king of the Heathobards. If, now, we look at the Helgi-lay, we find that Starkath is there called a brother of Hǫthbrodd, the representative of the Heathobards. Since both of these

<sup>1</sup> *þann sá ek gylfa | grimmiðgastan, | er barðisk bolr, | var á braut hofað.*

<sup>2</sup> In *Heroiske Digting*, p. 71. See Saxo, ed. Müller, Bk. VIII, p. 406. On Starkath's death, cf. Olrik, *Saksnes Oldhist.*, II, 226 ff.

<sup>3</sup> See e.g. Müllenhoff, *D. Alt.*, V, 316; Olrik, *Saksnes Oldhist.*, II, 222.



Starkaths are thus Heathobards, there can be no doubt that they are one and the same heroic personage. The fact that the Starkath of the Helgi-lay is a king (a point in which particular the poem does not agree with the original story) is doubtless due to the introduction of the eponymous King Høthbrodd instead of the Heathobard people and historical kings.

It should be mentioned also that just as Starkath in the Helgi-lay is called *grimmúðgastr*, 'the fiercest,' 'he who was most grim-minded,' so in *Béow.* the same quality is ascribed to the old warrior, the same adjective being used: *him bið grim sefa*, 2043, 'his mind is grim.' We may even detect a corresponding epithet in the *ferocitas animi* which Saxo ascribes to the old warrior Starkath. In using this epithet, then, the Helgi-lay follows some older poem.

Since the old warrior who, in *Béow.*, corresponds to Starkath in Scandinavian story induces the Heathobards to break the peace with the Danes, it is entirely in accordance with poetic justice that Starkath in the Second Lay should fall in the fight in which Helgi, the representative of the Danish kings, vanquishes Høthbrodd, the representative of the Heathobards.

The name *Starkaðr*, *Storkoðr*, arose from \**Stark-hoðr*. The last part of this name is the same as the first part of *Høðbroddr*, A.S. *Heaðobeardan*. Remembering that in *Béow.*, alongside of the name of the people called *Wedergeátas*, occurs with the same meaning the shortened form gen. *Wedera*; that the Anglo-Saxons used gen. *Hrêða*, *Hrêða*, synonymous with *Hrêdgotan*, *Hrêðgotan*; and that in Latin works *Visi*, sing. *Vesus*, is used as synonymous with *Wisigothae*, we may con-

clude that \**Stark-hǫðr* was first intended to mean 'the strong Heathobard.'

Starkath is not, therefore, as Svend Grundtvig and Müllenhoff thought, an abstraction who arose at the close of heathen times. The story about him is not originally Swedish but Danish. Danish epic poetry invented Starkath in order to express in his person the qualities which the Danes ascribed to the veterans of their hereditary enemies, 'the warlike Bards,'—gigantic strength, love of fighting, grimness, faithlessness. From the very outset, therefore, Starkath was described as an old warrior who went about alone from land to land, waged war as a business, and was well known everywhere.

The origin of this figure in epic story goes back to a time when the Danes had not yet ceased to think of 'the warlike Bards' as a people different from themselves,—to a time, indeed, when Danish epic poets regarded them as the people who long had been the most dangerous enemies of their land. At a later date Starkath, like Ingeld, was made over into a Dane, and new attributes were given to this saga-figure. Like Ragnar Lothbrók among the Norsemen, Ossian (Ossín) among the Scots, and other poets among other peoples, so Starkath has gained a reputation as a poet on the basis of the verses which later writers have put into his mouth. Even in *Beowulf* the old warrior is made to hold a discourse.

The O.N. story was the first to associate with him his grandfather, the giant *Storkeðr Alodrengr*, who arose under the influence of the Aloid Otus (Ὠτος), brother of Ephialtes.

The name *Heaðobeardan*, 'the warlike Bards,' agrees with *Bardi*, which Helmold (a German chronicler of the second half of the twelfth century) gives as the name of a warlike nation who occupied the city *Bardanwîc* (Bardewic, near Lüneborg), and whose land was called *Bardangâ*.

p. 160. It is the received opinion that these Bards<sup>1</sup> near Lüneborg were Langobards who had remained in their old settlements. The Langobards, who were akin to the Angles and Frisians, dwelt in the beginning of our era on the west side of the Elbe, south of the Chauks and east of the Angrivarians, so that, according to Zeuss, their land reached almost as far north as the present Hamburg, and in the south-east about to the borders of Altmark.<sup>2</sup> Even in the oldest times they are described as extremely warlike.<sup>3</sup> The Langobards are sometimes called *Bardi* in Latin poems.

Müllenhoff,<sup>4</sup> in opposition to the view accepted by most scholars, holds that the *Heaðobeardan* of *Beow.* cannot be identical with the Bards in Bardengau (since the latter could not as Vikings attack the Danes in their royal seat) or with the Langobards, for that people, as early as the end of the fifth century, had reached the Danube at a point midway in its course, and had soon after passed over into Pannonia. He

<sup>1</sup> Kluge (Paul's *Grundriss*, 1, 782), and Bruckner (*Die Sprache der Langobarden*, p. 32), compare the English place-names *Beardanêg*, *Beardingallah*, *Bardingsford*.

<sup>2</sup> Zeuss, *Die Deutschen*, pp. 109-112; Grimm, *Gesch. d. d. Spr.*<sup>1</sup>, 682 ff.

<sup>3</sup> *Langobardi, gens etiam Germana feritate ferocior*, Velleius, II, 106. *Langobardi . . . proeliis ac periclitando tuti sunt*, Tacitus, *Germania*, chap. 40.

<sup>4</sup> *Beowulf*, pp. 31 ff.

makes the ingenious and attractive suggestion that the Heathobards are the same people as the Erulians. Jordanes (chap. 3) tells that the Danes, who came from Skaane, drove the Erulians from the dwellings which the latter had previously occupied. This expulsion must have taken place a good while before 513. Müllenhoff identifies it with the decisive victory of the Danes over the Heathobards, which appears to have taken place about the same time; and to this victory, he contends, the Danish kingdom owed its foundation.

Several important considerations, however, appear to show that Müllenhoff's idea cannot be accepted as correct throughout. In the first place, the name *Heaðobeardan*, or 'warlike Bards,' is in entire agreement with that of the Bards and Langobards, while there is nothing whatever to support the supposition that the Erulians were called by that name. This objection is fundamental; until it is overthrown, the *Heaðobeardan* p. 161. cannot be explained as identical with the Erulians. Secondly, the Heathobards are not represented in *Béow.* as having previously dwelt in that land which the Danes later occupied, nor is the Danish kingdom represented as first established by the expulsion of the Heathobards. Thirdly, the story of Hǫthbrodd seems to make against Müllenhoff's theory. Hǫthbrodd, as I have tried to show, is a representative of the kings of the Heathobards. Now, the author of the First Helgilay imagines Hǫthbrodd's royal seat as on the southwestern shore of the Baltic; and this idea does not seem (for reasons given above) to have originated in the poem composed about 1020-1035 by a Norse poet,



who had sojourned at the court of the king of Dublin, but rather in a somewhat older poem, composed in England by a Dane.

I venture, then, to suggest another explanation. But I offer it as a conjecture merely; for I am well aware that while *Béowulf* is not strictly an historical source as regards events in and near Denmark about the year 500, the Helgi-lays and Saxo are much less to be relied on for historical information as to that time.

The emigration of the Langobards appears to have begun in the third or fourth century. According to a tradition preserved among them, they set out as Vinils from Scadanau (Skaane), and came first to Scoringa, the coast-land south of the Baltic, where they fought with the Vandals, and then went on to Mauringa in the eastern part of Germania.<sup>1</sup> From Latin authors we learn that they reached the Danube about midway in its course ca. 487, and that in the first half of the sixth century they crossed this river and marched into Pannonia. There is no mention of Slavs in our narratives of the Langobard emigration. From this account, in which I have followed Müllenhoff closely, p. 162, we see that the Langobards, at any rate as late as in the end of the fourth century, lived on the coast of the Baltic west of the Oder. Since their own traditions speak of their connection with Skaane and the Ocean, we may feel certain that they were at that time a sea-faring people. And since they are described as being more pugnacious and warlike than their neighbours, we may infer that the Langobards of the end of the fourth

<sup>1</sup> See Müllenhoff, *Deut. Alt.*, II, 97 f. Munch disagrees; see Sievers's *Beit.*, XVII, 124.

century acted exactly as the Heathobards of about the year 500 are said to have acted—making piratical expeditions against the Danes as well as other peoples. 'The warlike Bards' were doubtless, even at that time, dangerous enemies of the Danes.

In the fifth century the Erulians from the other side of the sea journeyed southwards. One section set out in 513 (after the Erulians were conquered by the Langobards) from 'the Sclavenians,' near the Carpathian Mountains, northwards, travelled through many desert regions, then to the Varns, who dwelt near the northern ocean, and still further on past the Danes to the Gauts.

Yet from all that is told us, we cannot, I believe, infer that no Langobards remained on the coast of the Baltic. From the information given us by Latin historians, we might equally well conclude that they deserted completely their old dwellings on the west side of the Elbe; but we find the Bards as a warlike people in those parts even in the Middle Ages. Why, then, may not some of the Langobards have remained on the coast of the Baltic until the beginning of the sixth century? These lands doubtless did not become completely Slavic before the end of that century, and Müllenhoff himself thinks that the Slavs in their advance towards the west met with scattered Germanic races everywhere. Of course, we may suppose that about the year 500 there were remnants of other Germanic races left behind on the coast of the Baltic between the Elbe and the Oder. But, since the Bards were the most warlike of all, it is probable that they led the expeditions in which the other races on the

coast of the Baltic took part, so that the Scandinavians, who were exposed to their Viking expeditions, could use Bards as a general term for all concerned in them. It may also be thought probable that the Erulians, p. 163. who do not seem to have belonged to the North Germanic races, waged war occasionally, before they journeyed south, against the Danes in conjunction with the Bards living on the coast of the Baltic, and under their leadership. Thus the author of *Beow.* could unite under the name of 'warlike Bards' the enemies of the Danes, both south of the Baltic and further north, on the one hand the Langobards, on the other the Erulians. Müllenhoff's theory, then, that the Heathobards of *Beow.* are the Erulians, may be partly—but only partly—correct. In the time, however, of which the A.S. poem gives us information, the Erulians can hardly have been dwelling in Zealand.<sup>1</sup>

In both the First and Second Helgi-lay, Sigrún, Hogni's daughter, is called a 'southern' (*sudræn*) maiden. Doubtless in ancient times the story placed the home of her father Hogni south of Denmark. In the oldest reference to this saga-hero, in *Widsið*, 21, we read: *Hagena [wéold] Holmrygum*, 'Hagena ruled over the Holmryge'; and these Holmryge are the *Ulmerugi* spoken of by Jordanes, *i.e.* the tribe called

<sup>1</sup> Binz in Sievers, *Beit.*, XX, 174, says: 'die Heathobarden . . . werden, wie doch ihr name vermuten lässt, ein mit den Langobarden verwanter, ingväischer, auf den später dänischen inseln der Ostsee sesshafter stamm, also nachbarn der Angelsachsen gewesen sein.'

L. Schmidt (*Zur Gesch. der Langobarden*, Leipzig, 1885, pp. 34 and 44, note) thinks that the similarity of names proves the identity of the Heathobards and the Langobards.



HELGI AND THE WOLFINGS 173

Ryge, on the 'Holms' (islets) at the mouth of the Weichsel.

Saxo makes Høgni a Danish king. It is the same personage whom Snorri mentions in the *Ynglingasaga*: viz. Høgni, Hild's father, king of East Gautland, whose daughter is married to Granmar, king of Sþødermanland; but the reference to Sweden is based on an Old Norse combination of later origin.

XIV

HELGI HUNDINGSBANI IN HIS RELATION TO THE  
WOLFINGS, HUNDING, THE VǪLSUNGS, AND  
SIGRÚN.

ALTHOUGH Helgi without any doubt was originally <sup>p. 164.</sup> a Scandinavian, not a German, hero, he is nevertheless brought into connection with other heroes, not Scandinavian, belonging from the outset to other Germanic peoples. And although the Helgi of our Lays seems originally to have been the same person as the historical Danish king Helgi, or at any rate to have borrowed his name from the latter, he is nevertheless placed in the Eddic poems in unhistorical surroundings, and associated with persons with whom the historical Helgi seems to have had nothing to do.

Thus the author of the First Lay attributed to Helgi features taken from the saga-hero Wolfdietrich, or rather identified him with the latter, although Wolfdietrich has his historical prototype in the East Gothic Theodoric, and in the German poem is said to be a son

of Hugdietrich—*i.e.* the Frankish Theuderik. Because of this identification, Helgi's mother is called Borghild, in imitation of Wolddietrich's mother Hildburg, though in the *Skjöldungasaga* (in Arngrim) the mother of Helgi and Hroar is named Sigrid.<sup>1</sup>

The chief reason for the transference of saga-features from Wolddietrich to Helgi, seems to be the fact that certain similarities already existed between the two stories, even before the foreign story influenced the Scandinavian; like Wolddietrich, the king's son, Helgi, is obliged to wander about as an outlaw after his father's death without getting any part of the kingdom, and must later expel the usurper who has wronged him.

p. 165. Nor was the Wolddietrich-story without influence on the form of the Helgi-story preserved in the Second Lay. In II, 1, Helgi calls himself 'the grey wolf,' just as Wolf-Theodoric in the Danish ballad, which is a transformation of a Low-German poem, is called Gralver, *i.e.* *gráulfr*, and *Granuoll*, *i.e.* *grán ulf*; and as Wolddietrich, B 369, designates himself as 'the wolf.'

In both the First and the Second Lay Helgi is called the descendant of the Wolfings; and this very race-name seems to have been one of the reasons why the story of Wolddietrich was attached to the Shielding Helgi. On the one hand, Theodoric, in the West Germanic story of his youth, was named Wolf-Theodoric because he was said to have been fostered by wolves, and the Völsungs Sigmund and Sinfjötli were at one time transformed

<sup>1</sup> It is doubtless an accidental resemblance between the Wolddietrich-story and the *Skjöldungasaga* that Hugi-Dietrich in *Wfd. A 6*, makes war on his nephew Fruote of Denmark, and that the Shielding Helgi, son of Halfdan, according to one form of the saga, kills Frotho.

into wolves ; while, on the other hand, as we know from *Beowulf*, the race of the Wolfings was mentioned in the old epic tradition of the Shieldings: Ecgtheow, a chieftain of the Géats (Jutes), having killed one of the warriors of the Wolfings, is forced to flee to the Shielding king Hrôthgâr. Hrôthgâr receives him as his liegeman, and sends the Wolfings gold to atone for the killing of the warrior. Here, however, the Wolfings (*Wylfingas*) are of a different race from the Shieldings (*Scyldingas*).

In *Wid.*, 29, the ruler of the Wolfings is called *Helm*, and in *Beow.*, 620, the queen of the Danish king Hrôthgâr is said to be of the race of the Helmings. It thus looks as if the Shieldings and the Wolfings were allied by marriage.

In the *Ynglingasaga* (ed. F. J., chap. 37), King Granmar's daughter at a banquet drinks to King Hjorvarth, and wishes prosperity to all Wolfings, while the beaker is being emptied in memory of Hrôlf Kraki.<sup>1</sup> Here Hrôlf Kraki is evidently named as the p. 166. most prominent representative of the Wolfings. This implies that the Wolfings were either of the same race as the Shieldings, or allied to them by marriage.<sup>2</sup> It suggests also that the Wolfing Helgi (Hundingsbani) was the same person as the Shielding Helgi (Hrôlf's father). But the complete identification of the Wolfings and the Shieldings is due to the influence of the foreign story of Wolf-Theodoric. This story may also have influenced the more historical form of the Scandinavian

<sup>1</sup> *Hon . . . gekk fyrir Hjorvarð konung ok mælti: 'Allir heilir Ylfingar at Hrólfs minni kraka.'*

<sup>2</sup> Cf. e.g. Sijmons in Paul-Braune, *Beit.*, iv, 177 f.

Shielding-saga, in which not only Helgi, but also Hroar and Hrólfr, are mentioned. I shall give one example of this influence.

In the saga of Hrólfr Kraki, Halfdan has three children: a daughter, Signy, married to the Earl Sevil, and two sons, Helgi and Hroar. While these sons are still children, Frothi attacks and kills his brother Halfdan. Afterwards Helgi and Hroar avenge their father by killing Frothi. Though their brother-in-law Sevil helps them in their revenge,<sup>1</sup> yet hints are given that earlier he regarded them with but little favour.<sup>2</sup> In fact, Earl Sevil's character is on the whole so vaguely and inconsistently described, that the genuine story with reference to him must, it is clear, be obliterated.

Arngrim Jónsson's extract from the *Skjöldungasaga* represents Earl Sevil in another light. The account there is as follows: Ingjald kills his brother, the Danish king Halfdan. Signy, Halfdan's daughter, is then brought up at the house of Ingjald's son Frothi, and Ingjald gives her in marriage to Sevil, a Zealand Earl of low origin.<sup>3</sup> Halfdan's sons Hroe and Helgi are brought up secretly, and, when old enough, avenge their father.<sup>4</sup> Evidently Sevil must have been described, in the story which underlay this account, as a con-

<sup>1</sup> Þessu nærst er Sævill jarl útkominn ok allir hans menn; hann mælti þá: aukum nú eldana, ok veitum lið sveinum þessum; er mér engi vandi við Fróða konúng (Fas., I, 14). Þeir bræðr þökkuðu góða liðveizlu Sævil jarli, mági sínum (Fas., I, 16).

<sup>2</sup> Sveinir þessir komu til Sævils jarls, ok voru þar viku, áðr enn þeir ræddu um þarvist sína við jarl; hann sagði: lítit mannaup ætla ek í ykkir vera, en ekki spara ek mat við ykkir um stundarsakir (Fas., I, 8).

<sup>3</sup> Frodonem; apud hunc edueta est filia Signya; quam Ingialldus vili baroni Selandiae Sevillo postea elocavit.

<sup>4</sup> *Aarb. f. nord. Oldk.*, 1894, p. 112 f.

temptible person, and ill-disposed toward the kin of Halfdan; for Frothi, the slayer of Halfdan, gives him Halfdan's daughter in marriage, and he is called 'vilis baro.' Similarly, in the story from which the saga of Hrólfr Kraki borrowed, Sevil was doubtless regarded as a wicked man and faithless towards Halfdan's kin; for in this saga his son Hrók is so described.

This Earl Sevil,<sup>1</sup> who must have shown himself faithless towards Helgi after the death of Helgi's father Halfdan, is, in my opinion, the same saga-figure as the Duke Sabene, who, according to Wfd. A, after having been in Hugdietrich's service, acted wickedly and faithlessly towards Hugdietrich's wife and the boy Wolfdietrich. This same personage is mentioned in *Wtd.* by the name *Seafola*, and is there said to have been, together with Theodoric, at the home of Eormanric. His historical prototype is, I believe,<sup>2</sup> the East-Roman leader *Sabinianus*, who, during the youth of the East-Gothic Theodoric, laid an ambush for a large body of Goths. Among these were Theodoric's mother and brother, both of whom escaped with great difficulty.

*Sevill* has an *l* like the A.S. *Seafola*; but its *i* shows p. 168. it to be the more original form, and *Seafola* must, then, have come from \**Seafela* (cf. A.S. *heafola* and *heafela*).

Still another story unites Helgi Hundingsbani with Helgi, son of Halfdan. H. Hund. once disguised himself and visited his enemies as a spy. In a verse which

<sup>1</sup> Sevil must have a short vowel in the first syllable. This is evident from the verse *en Sevil's rekka*, Fas., 1, 10. Arngrim (p. 113) also writes *Sevillo*. In Fas. and in Olrik's book the name is incorrectly written *Sevill*.

<sup>2</sup> Müllenhoff, on the contrary, regards *Seafola*, *Sabene*, as originally mythical.



he recites to a shepherd-boy when about to depart, he calls himself *Hamall*. Dettér has shown<sup>1</sup> that this name here signifies 'a castrated ram, wether' (Ger. *Hammel*). He also compares the story in the saga of Hrólf Kraki, in which Helgi, Hroar's brother, goes in disguise to the dwelling of his enemies under the name *Hamr*. In both cases the hero (H. Hund., or the Helgi of the saga) comes near being betrayed; for a verse is sung about him in which he is said to have 'flashing eyes.'<sup>2</sup>

I have already suggested that the epithet *buðlungr* is used of Helgi because Wolddietrich was of the race of Botelunc. Since Helgi is called *buðlungr* in the Second Lay (st. 44) also, we see that the poem on Helgi's death was not unaffected by the story of Wolddietrich.

Both the First and Second Helgi-lay speak of Helgi's feud with Hunding, the successful termination of which gained for Helgi the surname of Hundingsbani; and in the former we hear also of the slaying of Hunding's sons. But the author of this First Lay deals very briefly (10-14) with this part of the Helgi-story, using it merely as an introduction to his description of the fight with Hóthbrodd, which is his main subject.

p. 169. As I have already pointed out (above, p. 92), the saga-king Hunding, as Helgi's opponent, was probably taken from the foreign story of Wolddietrich, because the Irish story of Cormac's Birth (which appears to be

<sup>1</sup> *Ztsch. f. d. Alt.*, xxxvi, 14 ff.

<sup>2</sup> The sibyl in Hrólfssaga (Fas. 1, 12) says: *qtul eru augu | Hamr ok Hrana*. (Alliteration is lacking. *Qtul* is probably not a mistake for *hvogss*; but two lines have fallen out.) The following words are put into the mouth of *Blindr inn bglvlsi* in H. H., II, 2: *hvogss eru augu i Hagals þýju*; cf. 4: *qtul augu*.

connected with the Helgi-lays through the Wölfdietrich-story only) had a name, *Mac Con*, with the same meaning as Hunding. This may have been the chief reason why the Irish tale borrowed features from the stories of Wölfdietrich (Wolf-Theodoric). Moreover, in Anglo-Saxon heroic saga the *Hundingas* are mentioned; and this fact gives us another argument in favour of the view that the Frankish Wölfdietrich-story, which the Scandinavians learned from Anglo-Saxons, mentioned Hunding as the enemy of Wolf-Theodoric.

The old Norsemen undoubtedly brought the name *Hunding* into connection with *hundr*, 'hound, dog'; and Hunding was thought of as a faithless and despicable enemy. This we may infer not only from its relation with the Irish *Mac Con*, but also from a statement in that part of the Second Lay which narrates the Death of Helgi Hundingsbani. There we read: 'When Helgi came to Valhöll, Odin offered to let him rule over all with himself. Helgi said: "Thou shalt, O Hunding! give every man a foot-bath, kindle fires, bind the dogs, look after the horses, give drink to the swine, before thou goest to sleep"' (H. H., II, 39). This passage I would explain thus: Even before Helgi came to Valhöll, Hunding had been set by Odin to perform menial service. Helgi, in his capacity of ruler in Valhöll, simply repeats the kind of orders which Odin had previously given.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Luning (in his edition), Sijmons (Paul-Braune, *Beit.*, IV, 171 f.), Schullerus (Paul-Braune, XII, 238, note 1), Schück (*Svensk Literaturhist.*, I, 22), Gering (*Die Edda*, p. 180) and F. Jónsson (*Litt. Hist.*, I, 257) are, on the contrary, of the opinion that the strophe is out of place here, and that it really belongs to a word-combat between Helgi and



p. 170. With this incident Svend Grundtvig has compared the expressions in the treaty between the Russian Grand Duke Igor and the Byzantine Emperors<sup>1</sup>: 'Whoever in the Russian land will disturb such a friendship, he shall . . . if he is not baptized, have aid neither from God nor Perun [Russian thunder-god], and his own shield shall not protect him, and he shall fall before his own sword, his own arrows, and the rest of his weapons, and he shall be a slave for ever in the future world.' Farther on we read: 'And whoever from our land violates this [agreement], be he a prince or other, baptized or unbaptized, he shall not have aid of God, and shall be a slave for ever in the future life, and fall before his own weapons.'<sup>2</sup> The connection between these statements and the situation in the Helgi-lay becomes clearer when we observe that Sigrún's cursing of her brother for breaking his oaths to Helgi agrees with the curse in Nestor in an important point: he who violates the compact is to fall by his own weapons. Svend Grundtvig infers from this place in Nestor that Hunding had broken his oaths to Helgi. The

Hunding when both were still alive. This view seems to me erroneous. A poet could not let Helgi, who had not conquered Hunding before he killed him, say to Hunding in a dispute: 'Thou shalt do the work of a thrall,' without representing Helgi as boastful and ignoble, in direct opposition to the idea given of Helgi elsewhere. Moreover, there is no trace of such a word-combat. Niedner's view with reference to this strophe (*Zur Lieder-Edda*, Berlin, 1896, p. 27) also seems to me erroneous.

<sup>1</sup> In *Om de gotiske Folks Vaabened* (*Videnskabernes Selskabs Oversigt*, 1870, p. 95). Heinzel (*Ueber die Hervararsaga*, p. 73=487) compares the statement of Leo Diaconus (Bk. 9, chap. 8) that there was a belief among the Russians that he who was killed in battle must serve his conqueror in the other world.

<sup>2</sup> Nestor's Russian Chronicle, translated by C. V. Smith, pp. 45, 49.

menial tasks imposed upon him in Valhöll show, at all events, that he was regarded as a faithless and despicable enemy. Hence also he is called Hunding, *i.e.* 'the son (or descendant) of the dog,' while his enemy Helgi is called the Wolfig, 'the descendant of the wolf.'

In the prose preface to the Second Lay we read: *Hundingr . . . við hann er Hundland kent*, 'Hunding . . . from him Hundland gets its name.' We know, however, of no country so called.<sup>1</sup> This name *Hundland* must also have been connected with *hundr*, 'dog,' not p. 171. with the numeral *hund* in 'hundred.' Apparently Hundland was regarded as a far-distant and almost fabulous land.<sup>2</sup>

In *Wtd.*, 23, it is said that *Mearchealf* ruled over the Hundings. Can this *Mearchealf* be the same as *Marculf*?<sup>3</sup> Notker, of the monastery of St. Gallen, as early as the beginning of the eleventh century mentions *Marcholfus* as the opponent of Solomon in a word-combat, and Marcolf plays the same rôle later in Germany. This person

<sup>1</sup> The form *hundland* in Cod. A. M. 2845, 4to, of *Hervararsaga* (ed. Bugge, p. 327) is a mistake of the scribe, or a misreading for *Hírnaland*, which is in *Hauksbók*.

<sup>2</sup> My discussion of Hunding was written down before I read Werner Hahn's *Helgi und Sigrún*, pp. 62-67, where a theory resembling mine in some respects (*e.g.* as regards H. H., II, 39) is to be found. I have, however, taken nothing from the work of Hahn.

<sup>3</sup> After this was written, I saw the same suggestion in an article by Binz, in Sievers, *Beit.*, XX, 221 f, who, however, rejects it on the ground that the name *Marculf* (not *Mearchealf*) occurs in 'Solomon and Saturn.' But it is certainly not remarkable for a foreign name to be written in different ways (*cf.* Ger. *Marolf*, *Morolf*, alongside *Marcolf*). In Mid. Eng. there is a collection of proverbs which end with 'said Hendyng,' and in a prefatory strophe in one of the MSS. the latter is called *Hendyng*, the son of *Marcolf*. Binz suggests that *Hendyng* possibly arose from *Hunding*.

was earlier thought of as an Oriental demon-prince, and has his name from a Jewish idol *Marcolis*. In the A.S. poem *Solomon and Saturn*, of the ninth century, Saturn has taken his place as prince of the Chaldees. Among the lands in the East which this Saturn travelled through, *Marculfes eard* (II, 189), i.e. 'the home of Marculf,'<sup>1</sup> is mentioned as lying between Media and the kingdom of Saul.

If *Mearchealf* is the same as *Marculf*, then the author of *Wld.* thought of the Hundingas as a people far in the p. 172. east. By the *Hundingas* were doubtless originally meant those who were unbelievers in Christianity; for 'a heathen hound' is an expression common among all Germanic peoples. Perhaps, then, we may conclude that a Frankish poem on Wolf-Theodoric mentioned as an opponent of that hero one Hunding, by which name the author designated a heathen king in the East.

Wolfdietrich has his historical prototype in the East-Gothic Theodoric. Theodoric, at the age of eighteen, overcame the Sarmatian King Babai.<sup>2</sup> Have we an echo of this battle in the statement of the O.N. poem that Helgi, when fifteen years old, killed Hunding?

The O.N. poem has, however, preserved no indication of the origin which I have suggested for Hunding. On the contrary, his home is placed in a land in or near Scandinavia. In the Irish saga, MacCon is a usurper in Ireland.

<sup>1</sup> See *The Dialogue of Salomon and Saturnus*, ed. J. M. Kemble, London, 1848; K. Hofmann in *Sitzungsberichte der Münchener Akad.*, 1871, pp. 418-433; Schaumberg in Paul-Braune, *Beit.*, II, 52 ff; F. Vogt, *Salman und Morolf: Einleitung*.

<sup>2</sup> Jordanes, *Getica*, chap. 55.

Saxo also states (Bk. II, p. 80), that Helgi killed Hunding, and that he got from this killing the surname Hundingsbani. This feature, therefore, seems to have been present in the common source of Saxo and the Eddic poems, which, in my opinion, was a Danish poem about Helgi composed in England. The connection of the Helgi-stories with Hunding appears to be older than their connection with Sigmund, Sinfjötli, and Sigrún, of whom there is no trace in Saxo. The special form in which the fight with Hunding appears in Saxo seems to be very late.<sup>1</sup> But in making p. 173. Hunding a king of the Saxons, Saxo seems to be relying on a story much older than his own time. His account of how Helgi, after capturing Jutland from the Saxons, appointed Eska, Ægir and Ler to protect the land, certainly argues in favour of this view.

In one of the first sections of the Second Lay (II, 6, 8) the scene of Helgi's last fight with Hunding seems to be laid in the Jutish peninsula. But, in the present investigation, I shall not discuss further the first part

<sup>1</sup> Olrik (*Saksnes Oldhist.*, II, 299 f) suggests that in Helgi's slaying Hunding at Stade (*apud Stadium oppidum*), i.e. Stade, just south of the Elbe, we have a feature which arose after 1201, when the border of the Danish kingdom was pushed forward to the Elbe, and when Stade is first named in the history of Denmark. Helgi's war with Hunding in Saxo belongs, according to Olrik, to a late type of stories of wars in which the Danish king goes over the Elbe and wins victories over the Saxons in their own land. To this type would belong the expeditions of Dan and of Frodi, the son of Fridlef. It should be noted, however, that Stade is mentioned in the account of an expedition of Danish and Swedish Vikings into Saxony in 994, when the Saxons were defeated, Count Odo killed, and many Saxon princes captured. See *urbem, quae littori vicina stabat STETHU nomine* (Thietmar., Bk. IV, chap. 16; Pertz, III, 775); cf. Steenstrup, *Normannerne*, III, 224 f.

of the Second Lay (sts. 1-13). Such a discussion would necessarily include the stories of *Helgi Haddingjaskati* and *Hrómundr Greipsson*, and this would lead us too far away from the main questions before us.<sup>1</sup>

It was probably not long after Helgi had been identified with Wolf-Theodoric that Scandinavian poets in England brought him into connection with the story of the Volsungs; for, as I shall point out later, the stories of Wolddietrich and Siegfried, as current among West-Germanic peoples, already had many points in common.

The Danish king Helgi, in the accounts which are most nearly historical, is a son of Halfdan; but the First and Second Helgi-lays make him a son of Sigmund<sup>2</sup> and brother of Sinfjötli.<sup>3</sup>

p. 174. Helgi's men are called Volsungs,<sup>4</sup> so that the Lay of Helgi is called in the old MS. the Lay of the Volsungs. But Sigmund is a hero who belonged to West-Germanic saga in early times, and cannot originally have had anything to do with the historical Danish king Helgi. The Anglo-Saxons had associated Sinfjötli (A.S. *Fitela*) with Sigmund and given Sigmund the name Volsung (A.S. *Wælsing*) even before the Sigmund-story was united with that of Helgi. Neither the name

<sup>1</sup> There are many other Danish saga-heroes of the name Hunding. See Saxo, ed. Müller, pp. 59 ff, 68, 79, 350, 362; Olrik, *Saksnes Oldhist.*, II, 10 f; II, 250; cf. also *Fornaldarsögur*, III, 483, 486 ff. In *Flat.*, I, 22 = *Fornaldss.*, II, 4, *Norr* kills two kings in that land which was later called *Noregr*. The names of these two kings, *Hundingr* and *Hemingr*, seem to be taken from the beginning of H. H., II.

<sup>2</sup> H. H., I, 6; I, 11; II, 12; II, 15; II, 50.

<sup>3</sup> H. H., I, 8; cf. I, 33, and 37; also II, 23.

<sup>4</sup> H. H., I, 52; prose bits in H. H., II.

Volsungs, nor, as we have seen, the character Sinfjötli, had originally anything to do with an historical Danish king.

By making Helgi into a Volsung and a son of Sigmund, the old Norse poets succeeded in representing him as a king who already, by virtue of his race, was characterised as 'victorious'; for the Scandinavians believed that the Volsungs were loved above all others by Odin, the god of battle and victory. The members of this race bore names which suggest victory or superiority in battle. Their earliest ancestor was Odin's son *Sigi* or *Siggi*. The race culminated and ended in *Sigurðr* (Germ. *Siegfried*), who was regarded by the Norsemen as the greatest of all heroes. *Sigmund* was his father, and Sigmund's daughter was called *Signý*. The poet who made Helgi a son of Sigmund wished to suggest that he was comparable to the ideal hero Sigurth, though the latter is not mentioned in the poem.

The saga-features which unite the stories of Helgi and Sigurth—the race-name Wolfings, and Hunding—can all be best discussed when the Sigurth-story is examined. Just as Helgi's feuds with the race of Hunding end with the fall of Hunding's sons, so also the father and grandfather of Sigurth Fáfnisbani are killed by Hunding's sons, whereupon Sigurth in revenge slays Hunding's son Lyngvi and his brothers. Nor shall I discuss here the saga-features attached to Sigmund and Sinfjötli which we find in the Helgi-lays and in the prose bit On Sinfjötli's Death; they will be treated later in a general investigation of the Scandinavian stories concerning these heroes.



p. 175. *Sigrún*, who accompanies Helgi, was, in fact, no more associated with an historical Danish king Helgi than was Sigmund. She is represented by the author of the First Lay as Helgi's victory-genius, and is thus in our poem a Scandinavian Victoria. Just as Sigmund's name suggested 'victory,' so hers signified 'the victory-maiden,' and by bringing her into connection with Helgi, the poet had another means of characterising Helgi as the victorious king. Born of a foreign race and betrothed to a king hostile to Helgi, she nevertheless falls in love with the Danish king, whom she has never seen, hastens to his side, and protects him until he has conquered all his enemies and is in undisputed possession of the throne.

We have thus an example of an epic poem about an historical king which gradually gives up its historical character. In the process, its hero is brought into association with various historical persons, who came to be regarded as symbolical, and is finally idealised as the poetic representative of the Danish kings.

In the First Lay, *Sigrún*, with a company of maidens, rides through the air and over the sea, their birnies wet with blood and rays of light darting from their spears. In the storm she draws near from above and protects Helgi's ships. In the tumult of battle the maidens come from the heavens, whereupon *Hothbrodd* falls and Helgi is victor. Here *Sigrún* is half-divine. It is only her designation as 'daughter of *Hogni*' that reminds us of her mortal birth. A cold, supernatural splendour surrounds the maiden whom Helgi wins by his victory.

The character of *Sigrún* as she appears in the First



Helgi-lay has been affected by various foreign influences. Let us first see what it owes to the Wolfdietrich-story, to which, as we have seen, both Helgi-lays (but especially the First) are indebted in several particulars. In German B, Wolfdietrich is married to *Sigminne*, p. 176. who conveys him over the sea in a ship. She is transformed from the troll, Else the hairy, and corresponds to the mermaid in German A who rules over all which the sea covers. Something of this kind in the poem on Wolf-Theodoric which the Scandinavians learned to know in England, may have suggested Helgi's marriage to a supernatural woman, Sigrún, who rescues his ship in a storm and brings it into a safe harbour.

The name *Sigminne* is a compound like the M.H.G. *merminne*, mermaid, *waltminne*, forest-nymph. It means, therefore, 'a supernatural woman who brings victory.' The first part is identical with the first part of *Sigrún*, a name which means practically the same thing: 'a woman who possesses victory-runes,' 'a woman who has wonderful powers of bringing victory in battle.' But the relations between *Sigrún* and *Sigminne* will appear more clearly when we discuss the story of Helgi, the son of Hjörvarth. I shall then try to explain why Sigrún, unlike Sigminne, is not transformed from a troll. Moreover, Sigrún has bonds of connection on many other sides. The Wolf-Theodoric-story seems to have suggested little more than the indefinite motive that Helgi is helped by a supernatural woman who seeks and wins his love,—a woman who has power on the sea and influence over victory. We owe to other influences the definite presentation of

Sigrún's character and the description of her surroundings.

We need not assume that the Sigrún of the First Lay was affected by the Roman Victoria, though the fundamental conception of the two is the same. Irish influence, however, is certain.

The Sigrún who comes to Helgi in the battle and wishes him good luck from Høthbrodd's death, declaring  
 p. 177. at the same time that he shall gain her as his wife, presupposes on the one hand the Sigrún of the Second Lay, who comes to her loved-one, Helgi, on the battle-field, when Høthbrodd has got his death-wound, and expresses her joy that she shall not become the latter's wife (II, 25). But, on the other hand, as I have pointed out above (p. 62), Sigrún and her maidens, who come from the heavens in the midst of the turmoil of battle, when spears are clashing and wolves rending the dead, have taken the place of the Irish battle-goddesses (*badba*) who, according to the Irish story of the Destruction of Troy, hover about the heads of the warriors in the battle between the Greeks and the Trojans whilst spears whizz and warriors fall.

The appearance of the beings called in the Irish stories, *badb*, pl. *badba*, betokened slaughter in battle, or the death of a famous man. Lottner has already<sup>1</sup> compared the Celtic battle-goddesses and the Scandinavian valkyries. He explains their resemblance as due not to the fact that the Scandinavians and the Irish lived together in Ireland, but to relations centuries before between the Celts and Germanic races along the Rhine. I have, however, proved (chap. vi.,

<sup>1</sup> *Rev. Celt.*, I, 55-57; see I, 38 ff.

above) that the presence of these battle-goddesses in the Helgi-lay shows the influence of Irish literature on Scandinavian poetry.

This influence was exerted the more readily because the Norsemen themselves had from early times been familiar with just such conceptions; and several of the peculiarities in the description of the battle-maidens in the Helgi-poems are apparently derived from this native material. On the one hand, Germanic women (particularly when unmarried) from primitive times often wore armour and went into battle, even in companies; and so also in the Viking era, young women appear as warriors in a number of historical instances.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, Tacitus informs us that in his time the Germanic races thought women holy and half p. 178. divine, ascribing to them marvellous prophetic powers. One of the German Merseburg-lays tells of supernatural women (*itisi*) who alight on the earth (probably after flying through the air) and bind a hostile army with words of magic. The Anglo-Saxons, too, seem to have known supernatural women who could fly through the air, to whom were ascribed the power of bringing victory. In England we hear also of divine, demoniac valkyries (*wælcyrigeas*), i.e. women who elect the slain, women who know how to work magic to slay men in battle. These A.S. war-furies have been compared with the classical Erinnyes and Gorgons;<sup>2</sup> but it does not seem improbable that they were influenced by Irish beliefs.

Certain other things in the story of Sigrún remind

<sup>1</sup> Golther, *Der Valkyrienmythus*, pp. 7 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Kögel, in Sievers, *Beit.*, xvi, 407; Golther, pp. 17 f.

us of Irish motives, without our being able to prove historical connection. In 'the Old Lay of the Völsungs' Sigrún comes to Helgi, kisses him, and says that she had loved him before she saw him (H. H., II, 14-18). He takes her away with him, and thereby brings on himself a war, in which her father falls. In the Irish tale, 'The Festival of Bricriu,' Cuchulinn sets out on an expedition. He meets Findchoem, the daughter of Eocho Rond. She says of Cuchulinn to his men: 'I have loved him because of what I have heard of him' (and these are words which are often put into the mouths of women in Irish tales). She goes to Cuchulinn, lays both hands on his neck and gives him a kiss. He takes her with him to his home. Her father, king of a people called Ui Mane, follows Cuchulinn with many men and attacks him, but is taken prisoner. Peace is finally made, and Findchoem remains with Cuchulinn.<sup>1</sup>

- p. 179. When in the First Helgi-lay Sigrún and her maidens come riding to Helgi, 'a gleam of light broke forth from Flame-fells, and from that gleam came lightning flashes; [then rode three times nine maidens] high, helmet-decked, in the plain of heaven. Their birnies were stained with blood, and from their spears darted rays [of light].'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See *Fled Bricrend*, ed. with translation by Windisch, in *Irische Texte*, II, i, pp. 173 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Þá drá ljóma  
af Logafjellum,  
en af þeim ljómun (ljóma?)  
leiptir kvámu; . . .  
en af geirum  
geistar stóðu (I, 15).

Irish tales often speak of the gleams which flash from armed riders. When Findchoem's father, the king of Ui Mane, armed with a spear, comes riding with his company to the place where Cuchulinn is, the scout says: 'I see a glitter of fire from ford to mountain'; and the queen, to whom he speaks, remarks: 'That is the sparkling of the armour and the eyes of the Ui Mane on the track of their daughter.'

I have already pointed out (pp. 18, 33) that the flying swan-maidens in the Lay of Wayland are connected with Sigrún and her maidens in the Helgi-lay. I have also tried to show that there are points of contact between Sigrún and Atalanta, Meleager's love. But this is not all. Our accounts of Sigrún and of Sváfa (who is similar in character to Sigrún) can be shown to owe something to still other influences.

In a prose passage, the swan-maidens of the Wayland-lay are called valkyries.<sup>1</sup> The same expression is applied to Sváfa and her maidens in the prose account of Helgi Hjörvarthsson;<sup>2</sup> and in another prose passage to Sigrún and her maidens.<sup>3</sup> But the word *valkyrja* is p. 180. never thus used in the ancient lays: there it always signifies one of those maidens of Odin whose home is in Valhöll. In H. H., I, 38, the valkyrie at the All-father's dwelling, for whose sake all the *einherjar* would fight, is an entirely different being from Sigrún and

<sup>1</sup> In my edition, p. 163 a.

<sup>2</sup> Pp. 191 b, 193 a, 194 a.

<sup>3</sup> Pp. 173 a, 173 b, 176 a.

her maidens.<sup>1</sup> Since, then, the word *valkyrja* is used in the prose of other parts of the Edda in a different and less original way than in the First Helgi-lay, it is evident that the prose passages in the Lays of Wayland and Helgi were not written down in the same form by the author of the First Lay.

There is one incident which seems to have been carried over to the Helgi-lay from the story of Helgi, the son of Halfdan : Sigrún, to escape marriage with her hated suitor Høthbrodd, seeks aid from Helgi, who for her sake makes war on Høthbrodd, and overcomes him. So in the saga of Hrólfr Kraki,<sup>2</sup> Qgn, in order to avoid marrying her hated suitor Hrók, seeks aid from Helgi, who attacks and conquers Hrók.<sup>3</sup> This Hrók corresponds to Høthbrodd, not only in being the hated suitor

<sup>1</sup> In the prose bit in 11, between sts. 18 and 19, we read of Helgi's sea-expedition : 'They experienced on the sea tempestuous weather. Then lightnings flashed over them, and gleams stood into (illuminated) the ships. They saw nine valkyries ride through the air, and they recognised Sigrún. Then the storm subsided, and they came safe to land.' This description seems to have arisen from a fusing of H. H., 1, 15, where Sigrún comes with her maidens after the fall of Hunding's sons, with 1, 28-30, where Sigrún protects Helgi's ship in the storm. Yet the words *valkyrior nio* appear to show that the text of the MS. in 1, 15, is not complete. The text probably once read as follows :

*en af þeim ljóma  
leiptir kómu  
þá [riðu meýjar  
þrysvar níu]  
hávar und hjálmum  
á Himinvanga.*

Cf. *þrennar níundir meýja*, H. Hj., 28, while the prose bit in H. Hj., p. 173 a, reads : *valkyrjur níu*.

<sup>2</sup> *Fornaldarsögur*, 1, 25 f.

<sup>3</sup> This combination is suggested by Detter in Sievers, *Beit.*, XVIII, 100.

of a woman whom Helgi aids, but also in killing Hroar ; for, according to Saxo, it is Hothbrodus who slays Roe.<sup>1</sup> I have shown that *Hrókr* was earlier called *Hrærik* ; and in the *Skjöldungasaga* in Arngrim, Hroar is killed by the sons of Ingjald, Hrcærik and Frodi. In *Beow.*, however, Ingeld is king of the Heathobards. We have, therefore, another support for the theory that Hothbrodd is the representative of the Heathobards.<sup>2</sup>

The relation between Sigrún and Helgi Hundingsbani is not, however, the same as that between Qgn and Helgi the son of Halfdan, for Qgn is married to Hroar, and not to Helgi. The surroundings in which Qgn is placed differ also in other respects from those ascribed to Sigrún.

In the story of Helgi the son of Halfdan, as we have seen, Helgi makes war on Hothbrodd for a woman's sake. The introduction of this feature into the story brought it about that the conception of Sigrún was influenced by the account of Hild in the story of the Hjathnings.<sup>3</sup> Hethin carries off Hogni's daughter Hild, *i.e.* the battle-maiden. Hogni pursues Hethin, and a battle takes place, in which both Hogni and Hethin fall. Hild goes about on the battlefield and wakes the fallen to life, that they may fight again. It is in imitation of this story that the Helgi-poet makes Sigrún a daughter of Hogni. In both the First and Second Lays she is called Hogni's daughter ; and in the Second Lay we read of a fight between Hogni and Helgi (just as in the Hild-story there is a fight between Hogni

<sup>1</sup> So Dettér in place cited, and Olrik.

<sup>2</sup> But in *Beow.*, *Hræðric* is the name of Hrôthgâr's son.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Simrock, *Handbuch d. deut. Mythol.*,<sup>1</sup> p. 314.



and Hethin), Sigrún having followed Helgi without her father's consent. In that battle the father falls, and Sigrún goes about on the battlefield.

We have a direct reference to the story of the Hjathnings in H. H., II, 29, where Helgi says to Sigrún :  
 p. 182. *Hildir hefir þú oss verið*, 'Thou hast been a Hild to us,' because she has occasioned the strife between her lover and her relatives ; and Sigrún answers : 'I would choose to bring to life those who are dead if I could nevertheless hide myself in thy bosom.'<sup>1</sup> Here the poet is thinking of Hild, who went about on the battlefield during the battle of the Hjathnings and by her magic brought to life those who had fallen.<sup>2</sup>

In the poem which the Edda-collector called *Völsungakviða in forna*, i.e. the Old Lay of the Völsungs (or, the one composed by a heathen poet?), the first meeting between Sigrún and Helgi is a love-meeting. Sigrún seizes Helgi's hand, kisses him, and declares that she loved him before she had seen him. Then he is filled with love for her (H. H., II, 14-15). Here we have a

<sup>1</sup> Simrock (*Handbuch*, p. 394), and Edzardi (*Germania*, XXIII, 166), are right in giving to Sigrún the following words :

*Lífna munda ek nú kjósa  
 er liðnir eru  
 ok knættu ek þér þó í faðmi felask,*

and in finding in them a reference to Hild of the Hjathning-story, who wakes the dead. *Kjósa* is not merely 'to wish.' *Lífna* (acc. pl.) *kjósa* means 'to bring to life by incantations'; cf. *kjósa mæðr frá mögum*, Fáfn., 12; and Old Swed. *kíusa*, Old Dan. *kyse*, 'to bewitch, charm.'

<sup>2</sup> In the First Lay men come in hundreds to Helgi from Hethin's Isle. Possibly this name was introduced, most likely among the Danes in England, from the Danish form of the Hjathning-story; for in Saxo (ed. M., Bk. II, p. 242) Hogni and Hethin fight their last battle in Hethin's Isle (Hiddensee).

bond of union with the *Danish* Hild-story, for Saxo tells (what is at variance with Old Norse tradition) that Hethin and Hild loved each other before they had met. In Saxo we read also that at their first meeting they could not take their eyes from each other.<sup>1</sup>

The influence of the Hild-story shows itself more clearly in the Old Lay of the Völsungs and in the concluding portion of the Second Helgi-lay than in the p. 184. First Lay.<sup>2</sup> In the First Lay, Helgi's fight with Høthbrodd is the main subject; Høgni is almost lost sight of; and the relations between Sigrún and Helgi are not those of love. The account of the meeting of the lovers Helgi and Sigrún in the Old Lay of the Völsungs (H. H., II, 14-18) is quite different. Here it is Sigrún's father Høgni and her relatives whom Helgi has to fear in carrying off Sigrún, while Høthbrodd is only mentioned casually. In the ensuing battle, moreover, Sigrún's father and others of her relatives are Helgi's chief opponents.

From the relations just pointed out, and from the resemblance in certain points between Saxo's version of the Hild-story and the account of the first meeting of Helgi and Sigrún in H. H., II, 14-18, we may, I think, conclude that the latter is a working-over of verses in a Danish poem on Hild composed in England, with only such changes as were made necessary by the introduction of the names Sigrún and Høthbrodd.

The reproaches which Guthmund and Sinfjötli ex-

<sup>1</sup> *Nondum invicem conspectos alterna incenderat fama. At ubi mutuae conspectionis copia incidit, neuter obtutum ab altero remittere poterat; adeo pertinax amor oculos morabatur* (Saxo, Bk. v, p. 238).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Detter in *Arkiv f. nord. Fil.*, IV, 64 f; cf. IV, 70.

change in H. H., II, 19-24, unlike the other strophes in the Second Lay, do not mention Sigrún as the cause of the war, but seem to hint that Helgi's expedition to the land of the sons of Granmar has some connection with earlier feuds with Granmar's race. Here, moreover, Hogni is not named as Helgi's enemy, but only Høthbrodd and his kin. As Detter has rightly observed, this is really the same form of the saga as that which Saxo gives in his story of Helgi, the only difference being that Helgi in this part of the Lay is associated with Sinfjötli. Strophes 19-24 do not appear, therefore, to have been composed by the author of the other strophes of the Second Lay.

## XV

### CONCLUDING REMARKS ON THE FIRST HELGI-LAY.

- p. 185. BY comparing the Helgi-stories in the poetic Edda and in Saxo with the A.S. epos, we have found that a remarkable reconstruction of the stories of battles of the Danish Shieldings with their enemies was made in Britain. As far as we can judge from the A.S. treatment of these combats, this work kept close to history. The name of the foreign people, 'the warlike Bards,' was preserved. In the further reconstruction by Old Norse skalds, the story lost more and more the historical point of view which the A.S. epos had maintained. Instead of the Heathobards, with their kings Froda and Ingeld, the single personage Høthbrodd now appears as the enemy of the Shieldings. He is, however, still thought of as the king of another race; and

in the oldest Scandinavian form of the story his home is put south of the Baltic, where the Heathobards also seem to have dwelt. In Saxo, moreover, not only Helgi, but also Roe and Rolpho, take part in the war against Høthbrodd. A still further departure from historical fact is apparent in all the verses on Helgi in the Elder Edda, in which Helgi is placed in opposition to Høthbrodd as the single representative of the Danish royal race, and where the ancestors ascribed to him are simply poetic fabrications.

Even within the Eddic Lays themselves we can trace several different stages in the conception of the war against Høthbrodd. That which in one respect is the oldest is expressed in the dispute between Sinfjötli and Guthmund in the Second Helgi-lay. Here we have hints of a long-standing feud between the two races. Helgi's kin have conquered Høthbrodd's and subdued their land. Thereupon a treaty is made which is disadvantageous to Høthbrodd. This is broken, and Høthbrodd's men thirst for revenge. But a final decisive battle takes place between Høthbrodd and the Danish kings, in which, as we may imagine, Høthbrodd falls (it is so stated in all the O.N. sources which mention his p. 186. death). In the word-combat in the Second Lay, as well as in Saxo, whose form of the story is closely related, Sigrún is not referred to.

The next stage in the development is contained in the First Helgi-lay, which seems to have derived its form of the story from several sources, and in which the conception of the war with Høthbrodd is more original in certain respects than that in the Second Lay (with the exception of the word-combat), although

the verses in the Second Lay in which this conception is expressed are older than the corresponding verses in the First Lay. In the First Lay, though Helgi's war against Høthbrodd is directly occasioned by the appeal which Høgni's daughter, Sigrún, Høthbrodd's betrothed, makes to Helgi, yet Høthbrodd, not Høgni, is throughout represented as Helgi's real opponent. Moreover, the war against the foreign king is waged in defence of the Danish kingdom. After Høthbrodd is conquered, Helgi is undisturbed in his possession of the Danish royal seat. Yet in several other respects (as in the introduction of a series of names of fantastic places) the First Lay has much altered either the earlier poetic version of the Helgi-story or the facts of history.

Finally, we come to that stage in the development of the story which is revealed to us in the passionate and marvellously effective concluding strophes of the Second Lay. These I shall discuss at greater length in the next chapter.

Since all that is left of the older verses on Helgi Hundingsbani, which the author of the First Lay knew and utilised, are the fragments collected under the name of the Second Lay, we cannot get a clear idea throughout of what the author of the First Lay borrowed from these older poems.

In the section on the war with Høthbrodd older lays seem to have been followed in some important particulars respecting the course of the action. On the other hand, numerous motives, descriptive details, poetic expressions, and kennings are doubtless due to the  
p. 187. author of the lay as it lies before us. It is in the word-



combat that we can distinguish most clearly between what was added by the author of the First Lay himself and what he derived from the older poems ; for to the thirteen strophes (32-44) which contain the dispute in the First Lay, correspond the four (19-22) of the Second which in our collection are inserted at a later point in the development of the action, where they interrupt the narrative.<sup>1</sup>

The shorter form of the word-combat is evidently the older : the war with Høthbrodd is more primitive in conception, and the conversation is more dignified. The redactor took pleasure in filling out the retorts of the two subordinate persons with vulgar terms of abuse, under which are hidden allusions to the mythical world of gods and witches, especially to such as were known from the *Völuspá* and the *Grímnismál*.<sup>2</sup>

The First Lay seems most likely to be a working-over of that Helgi-lay of which we have fragments preserved in the word-combat in II, 19-22. But it was, I believe, a Danish poet in Britain who first sang of Helgi as the ideal representative of the Shieldings, and as the conqueror of Hunding and Høthbrodd, who were taken to represent the enemies of the Danes. The lost lays of this Danish poet doubtless formed indirectly the chief basis, so far as the foundation and form of the story were concerned, for the lays of the West-Norwegian poet to whom we owe the First Helgi-lay. In II, 19-22, we have, perhaps, a few verses of the Danish poet's lay<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See the phototype edition, p. 50, and my edition, p. 201.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Sijmons, in Paul-Braune, *Beit.*, IV, 170 f.

<sup>3</sup> Note that the name of the fish *fjirsungr* is now preserved only in Denmark and in the south of Norway.

in essentially their original form. Two strophes, in which Helgi breaks off the dispute between Sinfjötli and Guthmund,<sup>1</sup> have nearly the same form in both p. 188. lays (I, 45-46; II, 23-24). There has been considerable doubt to which of the two poems the strophes originally belonged.<sup>2</sup> It seems to me most probable that the author of the First Lay took them almost unchanged from the older lay.<sup>3</sup>

Sinfjötli is one of the subordinate characters in the Helgi-poems. On his birth there rested a stain, and he never appears in the old story as an independent leader. As early as in the English story of the Wælsingas, he is a follower of Sigmund. In like manner, the Helgi-poet represents him here as a follower of his brother and as a subordinate. He is pictured as a wilder, rougher and fiercer warrior than his brother, and the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Didrik's words in *Nibelungenlied*, 2282 (Lachmann).

<sup>2</sup> Dettér in *Arkiv*, IV, 74 f, thinks that the two strophes are more original in II than in I. F. Jónsson, on the other hand, is of the opinion (*Litt. Hist.*, I, 255 f) that they were inserted in II in imitation of I.

<sup>3</sup> For the following reasons: (1) If the strophes had originally belonged to I alone, there would have been no reason for repeating them in II. (2) Since the strophes which contain the dispute in I show in other respects imitation of II (not the reverse), it is improbable that we have the opposite relation here. (3) The place-name *á Mòinsheimum*, which points to Mön, can scarcely have been made up by the author of the First Lay. (4) *hildingar* is a more original expression than *hringbrotar*. (5) *þér er, Sinfjötli!* in II, 23, seems, as Dettér notes, more original than *Væri ykkar, Sinfjötli!* in I, 45. (6) Moreover, in II there are good reasons for Helgi to interrupt the conversation, since Sinfjötli in II, 22, has said that menial labour suited Guthmund better than fighting. Yet lines 9 and 10 in II, 24, are doubtless later. F. Jónsson's opinion might be supported by the fact that *deila* in II, 23 (if *d.* is correctly filled out thus) does not appear quite suitable; but this is not conclusive. It may have been because this expression was not happy that it was changed by the author of I.



poets used him to put in a clearer light the nobler, more dignified Helgi. Helgi will conquer his foes, but will not jeer at them.<sup>1</sup> He even acknowledges p. 189. their valour (II, 26): 'The sons of Granmar,' he says, 'do not seem to me good; yet it is best for high-born men to speak the truth: they have shown at Móins-heimar that they have courage in swinging swords.' May we not believe that such a way of thinking was developed in the more cultivated surroundings of England?<sup>2</sup>

There are in the First Lay, as we have seen, a series of names which point to places in Denmark and neighbouring lands. Of these *Ægir*, the representative of Eider, appears certainly to have belonged to the Danish model, and to have been introduced by the Danish poet in accordance with his own geographical knowledge. It seems probable, then, that the Norse poet took from his Danish model some at least of the names *Hringstaðir* (Ringsted), *Sigarsvellir* (near Sigersted), *Ísungr* (representative of the Isefjord), *Móinsheimar* (in Mön), *Heðinsey* (Hiddensee), *Orvasund* (Stralsund), and that he did not himself introduce all these names into the Helgi-poem following the stories of Danes from these different places. In the case of *Sigarsvellir*, this supposition is supported by the fact that the name also occurs in *H. Hj.*, 35. The Danish expedition to Venden would, of course, familiarise a Danish poet of the time

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Sv. Grundtvig, *Heroisk Digtning*, pp. 35 f.

<sup>2</sup> It is not far from this to Koll's remark in Saxo (ed. M., Bk. III, p. 136): 'Even if the soul is full of hate, yet let friendship be there also, which in due time may take the place of bitterness,' wherein Olrik (*Saksen Oldhist.*, II, 157) finds thoughts of the Valdemar era.

of Canute or Svein Forkbeard with Stralsund and Hiddensee.<sup>1</sup>

In suggesting that a Danish poet in Britain, in a poem which was perhaps composed in Svein Forkbeard's time, mentioned Ringsted as the Danish royal seat, I cannot but think of the statement in *Fagrskinna*, that Svein Forkbeard held a feast of inheritance after his father's death in that same city Ringsted.

p. 190. The Danish poet was probably stimulated to compose his Helgi-lay by the expeditions which the Danes made to Venden in his own lifetime—most likely, as I imagine, during the reign of Svein Forkbeard.

The Norse author of the First Lay probably lived at the court of the Scandinavian king of Dublin; and, as I have said, his poem seems to me, because of its relations with an Irish story and with Icelandic poems, to have been composed ca. 1020-1035. He sings the praises of an ancient Danish king. All nature expresses joy at the birth of the royal child. The Fates predict that the boy shall become the most famous and the best of all kings. He begins to engage in battle when but fifteen years old. The genius of victory chooses him as her beloved, and by her help he conquers his opponent, to whom she is betrothed. The poem ends with the expression of her good wishes for his happiness. Now shall he unopposed possess Ringsted, and govern his land in peace. Now has he won for ever the victory-maiden.

It is hard to resist the idea that it was Canute the Great who inspired the poet to write this lay. We can

<sup>1</sup> On *Svarinshaugr*, see pp. 133 f, and on *Varinsfjörðr*, see pp. 132 and 134.

readily imagine that in praising the ancient Danish king Helgi, his mind was fixed on the young Danish king who in his own time had led warlike expeditions to Venden, and who had won and exercised in Britain the greatest power which any Scandinavian ever possessed there. Moreover, even as Helgi began his life of warfare at fifteen, so Canute does not seem to have been older when he accompanied his father on the latter's expedition to England in 1013.<sup>1</sup>

The author of the First Helgi-lay probably sojourned among the Scandinavians, who were at one time in Northumberland, at another in Dublin. We may then, perhaps, infer that after the Battle of Clontarf he left Dublin and went to England, where he may have been in the service of Canute the Great. If it was of Canute that he thought in his poem, the work was doubtless composed after Canute had received the homage of the whole of the English in 1017, and had married the widow of the English king.

Under Canute there were many relations between p. 191.  
England and the Slavic lands on the Baltic.<sup>2</sup> Jomsborg (the fortress of the Jom Vikings) was subject to Canute; and farther east the Danes had won possessions before his time. Early in his reign, certainly before 1027, Canute made at least one plundering expedition from England to the southern and eastern coasts of the Baltic. He subdued districts in Prussia, particularly those on the Frische Haff. One source names among

<sup>1</sup> Steenstrup (*Normannerne*, III, 298) says that in the summer of 1017 Canute was not much over twenty years old. On Canute's age, cf. Munch, *Norske Folks Hist.*, b, 126 f.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Steenstrup, *Normannerne*, III, 306 and 327.

the tribes whom he made his tributaries, the *Roani*—i.e. the inhabitants of Rügen. Near Rügen, according to the First Helgi-lay, Helgi's fleet assembled in the war with Hothbrodd. His expedition is not represented as going to the same district as Canute's, but farther west to what is now Mecklenburg. But in deciding upon the places to which the expedition of the ancient king was to go, the poet doubtless felt himself to some extent bound by the account in the older Helgi-lay and by the names there given. In describing Helgi's expedition to Wendland he may at all events have thought of Canute's expedition thither; and in lauding Helgi's victory he may have wished to praise the similar one gained by Canute.

Earlier historians put Canute's expedition to Slavic lands in the year 1019; but Steenstrup tries to prove<sup>1</sup> that it took place in 1022-1023. When the poet tells of the prediction of the Norns at the birth of Helgi, the Danish king, he says that the fate-goddess 'fastened a cord toward the North and said that it should hold for ever' (*brá . . . á norðrvega einni festi, ey það hon halda*). When the O.N. poet sang thus, did he know that Canute had already prepared for, or completed the capture of Norway? If so, his work was not composed before 1027 or 1028.

p. 192. But enough of these airy combinations! I acknowledge

<sup>1</sup> *Normannerne*, III, 322-328. In the summer of the same year in which Svein Forkbeard died, Canute and his younger brother Harald made an expedition to 'Sclavonia' to bring back their mother Gunnhild, who had been repudiated by Svein. Did the Helgi poet think of Canute's brother when he made a 'young king,' who bore the name of one of the Shielding kings, *Hjörleifr*, or better, *Herleifr*, accompany Helgi as the latter's subordinate on the expedition to Hothbrodd's land?

that the guess that the author of the First Helgi-lay, when he wrote about Helgi, thought of Canute the Great, has no solid foundation in external evidence. Still, I think I have shown that the poet was of Norwegian nationality ; that he was born in the western part of Norway, and that he composed his poem in Britain ca. 1020-1035 ; that, moreover, he sojourned for some time among English and Irish, and probably associated with Irish poets at the court of the Scandinavian king of Dublin.

This poem was not, therefore, first composed in the stillness of a mountainous Norwegian valley, nor on the lonely shores of an ice-bound sea, but in the heart of Northern Europe—where Norsemen and Danes, Irish and English were assembled together, under the stress of great events, on a soil which, from early times, had been inundated and made fertile by the culture of the south.

The life of the Norwegian poets among the Irish, and the influence of Irish literature on O.N. epics, supplied the Norsemen with new material, widened their horizon, and disclosed to their imaginations a richer and more stirring life than that to which they had been accustomed. Through the Irish stories the Norse poets became familiar with new images drawn from a splendid, fantastic, supernatural world.<sup>1</sup> But the wild life of the Vikings, the roughness and sensuality of character which it occasioned, set its mark on Old Norse poetry. It is important to observe, however, that this roughness and sensuality in the poems on Helgi Hundingsbani

<sup>1</sup> 'These poems discover an ideal of beauty, an aerial, unearthly, fairy world, and love of nature, which we do not find in the sagas' (Vigfusson, in *C.P.B.*, I, lxi).



and Helgi Hjörvarthsson is ascribed to subordinate persons only—to the watchmen Sinfjötli and Atli, to the brother of the hostile King Guthmund, and to the sea-troll Hríngerth, who are all contrasted with the chief heroes. In the chaste description of the relation between the victory-maiden and the hero in all three Helgi-lays, as well as in the clearness with which the chieftain's noble, high-minded conception of his duty towards his opponents is expressed, we may perceive the seriousness, moderation, and purity of the Old Norse mind, influenced no doubt for the better by the poet's life in England.

The author of the First Lay was no sure master of style.<sup>1</sup> His treatment of his material is also unequal. On the one hand, knowing apparently that the account of the slaying of Høthbrodd was treated at length in older Helgi-poems, he hurries far too rapidly through this part, and as a result makes no scene in it vivid or clear. On the other hand, he draws out to an unnecessary length the rough and vulgar word-combat between Guthmund and Sinfjötli, which in no way contributes to the main action. There is little individuality, depth, or insight in his description of personal character. There are no moving soul-struggles or conflicts of mind. But the poet had, nevertheless, a rich imagination, and succeeded in painting his central scenes in glowing and vigorous colours. He opens his lay with a grand panorama at Helgi's birth, and he unfolds before us a

<sup>1</sup> The expression *þeir sjálfir* 31, of other persons than those referred to just before in *þeim sjálfum* 30, is not happy. Strophe 44 repeats expressions from 34.

marvellously imaginative picture in Sigrún's coming with the lofty, helmet-decked company of maidens riding through the air to the tumult of battle. The evidence of later poems shows us that the First Helgi-lay long exercised a deep and widespread influence.

In this poem the description of external things takes up more room, in comparison with the dialogue, than in any other O.N. mythic-heroic lay, with the exception of the poem on Ríg. The account is expanded by means of general descriptions which show a marked contrast to the brevity of other lays. This is not, apparently, due to an effort on the part of the author to reproduce the older, more epic, native mode of presentation, but to the fact that he was influenced by p. 194. Irish tales, characterised as they were by richness of vocabulary.

The Norseman found in the Irish descriptions magnificent and complete colouring; but, in opposition to their mannered and overloaded accounts, which sometimes (as in the Destruction of Troy) degenerate into mere verbiage, his sonorous verses bring before us a very graphic picture, full of life and action; we see the Vikings row away from land, and the ships of the king bid defiance to the storm.<sup>1</sup>

If we compare the Helgi-lays with the majority of the O.N. poems treating of the gods, and with the Lay of Wayland, the oldest heroic lay, we observe that the Helgi-lays make considerable use of kennings and other poetic appellatives. These appellatives are more fre-

<sup>1</sup> The lost A.S. poem on Wolf-Theodoric may also have contributed to the descriptive elaboration of the O.N. lay; but this it is, of course, impossible to determine.



quent in the First Lay than in any other O.N. heroic poem.<sup>1</sup> Since, now, the First Lay arose, as it seems, under English and Irish influence, and in particular since it shows the influence of Irish literature more extensively than has as yet been pointed out for any other Eddic poem, it is *a priori* probable that acquaintance with foreign (particularly Irish) works had something to do with the greater use of kennings in the O.N. lays. This inference is supported by a closer investigation.

I have shown (pp. 26-28) that *mistar marr* (H. H., I, 23) as a kenning = 'steed of the mist' (?) must be due to a misunderstanding, and that originally the poem doubtless had a simple direct phrase = 'misty moor,' which was misunderstood later because it contained English words. We have also seen (pp. 35 f, 54) that the expression *hugins barr* (I, 54), 'the grain of Odin's raven,' applied to corpses, agrees with an Irish poetic p. 195. expression, and arose under Irish influence. I have pointed out, moreover, that many other kennings are inventions of the author of the First Lay, who imitated them from phrases in older extant Eddic poems. In at least one instance I have shown that he misunderstood the phrase which he imitated.<sup>2</sup>

In two strophes (13, 27) of the First Helgi-lay end-rhyme is used and seems to be intentional. This

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Sv. Grundtvig, *Er nordens gamle literatur norsk?* pp. 82 ff; Jessen, *Über die Eddalieder*, p. 43; Sijmons, *Ztsch. f. d. Phil.*, xviii, 113.

<sup>2</sup> On *ógnar ljómi* see pp. 18 f; *geirnmír*, 15 f, 21; *vakka hirtir*, 115; *Kólgu systir* and *Ægis dóttir*, 41 and 61; *sárvitr* and *hjálmvitr*, 18 and 33; *Viðris grey*, 86; *varga vinr*, 84 f; on *blóðormr* see the discussion of the Lay of Helgi Hjörvarthsson.

peculiarity, which occurs also sporadically in some other Eddic poems,<sup>1</sup> deserves special mention when it occurs in a poem which seems to have been much influenced by Irish and English.<sup>2</sup> The same may be said of the lists of names (in strophes 8, 51, 52). To this subject I hope to return at another time.

In the Edda-collection the First Lay is placed before the account of Helgi Hjörvarthsson, and thus the poems on Helgi Hundingsbani are separated from each other. This order may be compared with that by which the *Grípisspá* has first place among the Sigurth-poems. In both cases that poem is put first which forms a complete and finished whole, and which in a continuous metrical account gives a review of a series of events in the hero's life ; but, in both cases, the poem thus chosen to precede the others is one of the latest in the Edda-collection.<sup>3</sup>

## XVI

### THE HELGI-LAYS AND THE STORY OF ERIC THE ELOQUENT.

IN his fifth book Saxo tells a story of Eric(us) the Eloquent (*mál-spaki*). Olrik has shown clearly<sup>4</sup> p. 196. that this is an O.N. *fornaldarsaga* which the Icclander Arnald brought to Denmark from the coasts of Roga-

<sup>1</sup> In *Völuspá* ; H. H., II, 25 ; *Sigurðarkviða*, etc. ; cf. Edzardi in Paul-Braune, *Beit.*, v, 573 f.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. my *Bidrag til den ældste Skaldedigtninges Historie*, p. 66 f.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. R. Meyer in *Ztsch. f. d. Alt.*, XXXII, 405 ; F. Jónsson, *Litt. Hist.*, I, 120.

<sup>4</sup> *Saksæ Oldhist.*, II, 49 ff.

land and Jæderen. It has borrowed features from various sources; and, amongst others, shows points of contact with both the First and Second Helgi-lays.

Granmar has many sons. When Helgi, accompanied by his brother Sinfjötli, who is less noble and dignified than he, comes sailing westwards to land, Guthmund, one of Granmar's sons, rides to the shore and enters into a conversation with Sinfjötli. The reproaches they fling at each other—especially in the First Lay—contain the worst sort of abusive terms. After the conversation, Guthmund rides with all speed to his brother Høthbrodd to announce to him that enemies have landed. Høthbrodd collects warriors. Later, a battle takes place in which the sons of Granmar fall before Helgi.

In Saxo's story, Westmar(us)<sup>1</sup> (the second part of whose name is the same as that of Granmar) and his twelve sons are with Frotho. Eric, accompanied by his brother Roller(us), who is described as less noble and dignified than he, comes sailing to Frotho's land. Grepp(us), Westmar's son, hearing this, rides to the shore and enters into a conversation with Eric. The conversation, which is in verse, contains the worst sort of abusive terms.<sup>2</sup> When Grepp has no retorts left, he

<sup>1</sup> In connection with the name *West-mar*, we may observe that Helgi sails *westwards* to the land of Granmar's sons.

<sup>2</sup> In the details also there are some similarities with the First Helgi-lay. With *nec nisi crimen oles*, Saxo, p. 200, cf. *gerðir þik frægjan af firinverkum*, H. H., I, 41, 'thou didst make thyself notorious by crimes.' With *exanimis corvos exanguis corpore pascas | esca feris, avidae praeda futurus avi*, Saxo, p. 201, cf. *Fyrr vildak | at Frekasteini | hrafna sæðja | d hraum þinum*, H. H., I, 44, 'First would I at Wolfstone sate ravens with thy corpses.'

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rides home in all haste to collect warriors against the strangers who have come. Afterwards, Eric slays the sons of Westmar.

Wherever there is connection between the tale of Eric the Eloquent and the Helgi-lays, the latter served, in my opinion, as model for the former.

The Eric-story also shows kinship with what we read in H. H., II, 5-13, and in the preceding prose passage: Eric slays Frotho's chieftain Odd (Oddo) on the coast of Denmark, then puts out to sea and sails in to Lässö. Afterwards he goes with but one ship to Zealand, and, lacking provisions, he and his men commit depredations along the coast, and carry the flesh of the slaughtered cattle on board their ship. When Eric later goes ashore, he meets Westmar's son Grepp, and in a series of verses they exchange rough words with each other. These words begin with Grepp's questions: 'Who art thou? What dost thou seek? Whence dost thou come? Of what race art thou?' Afterwards Eric, in a conversation with King Frotho, tells in enigmatical words of Odd's death, and the king confesses that Eric has confused him by his obscure speech.

After Helgi has slain Hunding, he sails with his ship into a bay. He and his people commit depredations there, and eat the raw flesh of the cattle they slaughter. Sigrún comes to him, and they exchange words in verse with each other. She asks first: 'Who are ye? Where is your home? What are ye waiting for? Whither will ye go?' In his reply, Helgi says: 'Our home is in p. 198. Lässö.' Thereupon he tells in boasting words of Hunding's death.

When Eric boastfully recounts the death of Odd, he

plays on the word '*odd*' (point of the sword), saying: 'The wolves licked the weapons of the slain, for they were tired of the corpse; there Odd (point) was struck away from the king's strength.'<sup>1</sup> Observe that Helgi, in boastfully recounting the death of Hunding, says:

*ætt ara*  
*oddum saddak* (11, 8).

'The young of the eagle I sated with points.' If we write here:

*ætt ara*  
*oddi saddak*,

'I sated the young of the eagle with the point,' we might also have a play on the word '*odd*' (although the words are not to be so understood in the Helgi-poem), and it might be a boastful expression for: 'I slew Odd, and gave his corpse to the young of the eagle to eat.'

It looks, therefore, as if the poet who invented the story of Eric the Eloquent drew the features just pointed out, in which it agrees with the story of Helgi, from the Helgi-lays. Into the statement in the Helgi-poem, 'I sated the young of the eagle with the point,' the poet seems to have introduced a play on the word '*odd*.'

But the relation of the Eric-story to the Helgi-lays contributes something to the history of the latter. Olrik points out that Eric's obscure speeches remind us

<sup>1</sup> *Exsatiati humanis cadaveribus lupi suprema telorum acumina collambebant. Ibi cuspidis a robore regis excussa est* (Saxo, ed. M., p. 206). Eric explains this in what follows: *Caedem enim Oddonis mea gestam manu superiori cuspidis appellatione signavi.*



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of episodes in the sagas, in which may be found very close parallels to Eric's obscure publication of the manslaughter. To this I would add the following remark: The enigmatical speeches with their plays on words<sup>1</sup> in the Eric-story and in Icelandic sagas have p. 199. their models in Irish heroic tales. We have an example in the story of the Wooing of Emer, belonging to the old Ulster heroic cycle, and preserved in the MS. Lebor na-h Uidre of ca. 1100.<sup>2</sup> Here the hero and his betrothed exchange enigmatical speeches with plays on words, which speeches are, without a doubt, closely akin to those in Old Norse.

The obscure speeches in the Irish tale, as in the O.N. story, are intended to show the surpassing ingenuity of the speaker, which enables him to express himself so that the majority do not understand what he says and only those of unusual powers comprehend his words. The plays on words are so complicated that one of the personages in the story has to explain their meaning.

Cuchulinn's first enigmatical speech is made in answer to Emer's questions: 'Whence hast thou come? Where didst thou sleep?' In like manner, Friththjóf gives an ambiguous answer to the questions: 'What is thy name? Where wast thou last night? Where is thy kin?' Eric's obscure speech is also occasioned by the questions: 'Whence hast thou come, and how didst thou come here?' Frotho goes on to inquire

<sup>1</sup> For these see Heinzel, *Beschreibung d. isl. Saga*, pp. 192 f.=[296 f.] and Cederschiöld, *Kalfdrápet*, pp. 22 f. Let me particularly call attention to *Glúma*, chaps. 14 to 16; *Frithhj.* s., chap. 13 (*Fornald.* s., 11, 95); *Króka-Refs* s. (Copen., 1881), p. 34; *Dropl.*, p. 10; *Finnb.*, pp. 79, 87 f.

<sup>2</sup> Translated by Kuno Meyer in *Archaeological Review*, 1889.

of Eric the way he has taken. This same question Emer asks Cuchulinn, whereupon the latter answers with a play on words. Moreover, Emer's statement of the achievements which the hero must perform in order to win her, contains a series of plays on words.

Thus, in the story of Eric the Eloquent, features from the Helgi-lays and features which have Irish models are fused together. May we not, therefore, infer that it was in the British Isles that the inventor of the Eric-story became familiar with the Helgi-lays and with the obscure speeches with numerous plays on words modelled after passages in Irish tales?

p. 200. Moreover, the first conversation between Sigrún and Helgi in the Second Lay, although it does not contain artificial puns, may nevertheless be said to show a tendency toward obscure speeches in its covert pictorial expressions. Helgi hints at the death of Hunding when he says: 'I took bears in Bragalund and sated the young of the eagle with (sword-) points'; and Sigrún praises Helgi for being shrewd (*slægjan*) when he 'publishes manslaughter in death-runes.'<sup>1</sup>

## XVII

### THE POEM ON THE DEATH OF HELGI HUNDINGS- BANI AND SIGRÚN.

THE so-called Second Lay of Helgi Hundingsbani includes, as we have seen, fragments of prose and verse which did not all belong together originally, and which

<sup>1</sup> With *i valrúnnum* cf. A.S. *walrún*, Elene, 28; with *vígspjöll* cf. A.S. *gúðspell*, *wéaspell*.



are not all the work of the same author. In this investigation I shall not discuss strophes 1-13 of this Second Lay with the prose passages attached, except when remarks on them are necessary in elucidating the other accounts of Helgi. I have already spoken of the treatment of the story of Helgi's fight with Høthbrodd in H. H., II, 14-18, and in H. H., II, 19-24.

The description of Sigrún's meeting with Helgi in 'the Old Lay of the Völsungs' (H. H., II, 14-18), directly after the prose narrative of Helgi's fight with Hunding's sons, begins thus: 'Sigrún sought out the glad prince (*sikling*); she seized his hand, she kissed and greeted the helmeted king. Then awoke the chieftain's love for the maiden. She said that she loved Sigmund's son with all her heart before she had seen him.' It seems p. 201. to me certain that these words describe the *first* meeting between Helgi and Sigrún, who, according to I, 15 ff, meet for the first time *after* the fall of Hunding's sons. If we follow the arrangement in the Edda, we must believe that Helgi does not fall in love with Sigrún until she comes to him a second time; and this seems irreconcilable with the characteristics of heroic poetry. Further, the arrangement in the Edda would lead us to believe (what certainly would be very remarkable) that Sigrún, after having seen Helgi twice, and after having spoken to him on a previous occasion, waits until she sees him the third time before she reveals the fact that she loved him with all her heart before she had seen him. H. H., II, 5-13, therefore, which tells of the meeting between Helgi and Sigrún before the fall of Hunding's sons, cannot have belonged to the same poem as II, 14-18, nor can the two fragments have been com-

posed by the same poet. In support of this opinion we may observe that Sigrún is represented as a battle-maiden in II, 5-13, while the relations between her and Helgi in II, 14-18 are those of love. Again, the fact that the name 'the Old Lay of the Völsungs' in the MS. is not applied to the strophes which precede II, 14, seems to show that II, 13 and II, 14-18 were not originally parts of the same poem. Further, II, 19 ff., as I have already pointed out, contain a form of the story different from that in II, 14-18, and did not, therefore, belong to *Völsungakviða in forna*.

In my opinion, II, 25-51 (including 29 and 39) are fragments of one and the same poem,<sup>1</sup> the conclusion of p. 202, which seems to be completely preserved. The story here ends tragically: Helgi kills in battle Högni, the father of Sigrún, his loved-one, and is himself slain in revenge by Sigrún's brother.

In this poem Sigrún is very unlike the half-divine victory-maiden in the First Lay, although there too she is Högni's daughter. The conception of Sigrún in the First Lay resembles closely that in sts. 5-13 of the Second, where Sigrún is represented as present, without

<sup>1</sup> So also Sijmons in *Ztsch. f. d. Phil.*, XVIII, 16, who, however, does not include 29 and 39. On st. 39 see above, pp. 179 ff. St. 29 seems to me to presuppose 28 and the explanation which is given directly after. First Helgi says: 'Thou wast destined to awake strife between chieftains.' On hearing these words, 'Sigrún wept.' And because of this, Helgi says (II, 29): 'Be consoled, Sigrún!' It cannot be proved that a poet might not have changed the metre in different parts of the same poem. The transition to the more lyric metre *ljóðahátttr* in II, 29, seems to me very effective.

In my opinion, it is also incapable of proof that the poet treated the story in continuous strophes only, without prose passages. But more on that question another time.

Helgi's knowledge, at the battle in which Hunding is slain, and where she is said to see the hero in the bloody stern of the long ship when the billows rise high. But only in the accompanying prose passages is it expressly stated that Sigrún rode through the air and over the sea, and we cannot tell from the verses referred to whether she travelled alone or with a company of maidens.

In the Old Lay of the Völsungs (H. H., II, 14-18), on the contrary, and especially in Helgi's Death, Sigrún is simply represented as a devoted woman who leaves father and brothers to accompany the hero whom she esteems the bravest of all men. She becomes his wife and bears him children. She cannot resist going with him, though she thereby brings about the death of her kin and her husband. Fate has decreed that she, like Hild, shall awaken strife. In Helgi's Death, Sigrún is intense and passionate in her love: she clings faithfully to Helgi even after his departure for Valhøll. We do not see her advance in the tumult of battle, armed, at the head of a company of maidens. She wanders over the battlefield alone, searching for her beloved among the slain. It is to the warrior, to him who joined in p. 203. Odin's game, that she looked up with admiration. His battles and victories, the bloody death of his enemies, are to her life and joy. When she embraces the dead Helgi in the grave-mound, she says: 'Now am I as glad of our meeting as Odin's corpse-greedy hawks when they see warm meat (bodies) on the battle-field' (II, 43). And with fearful mien she stands and curses her brother, who has announced to her that he has killed Helgi, praying that he may be slain with his own sword.

The story of Helgi's Death is here entirely different from the story of the Shieldings in its oldest form, as we know it from *Beowulf*. The Shielding-story is made up of 'reminiscences of the achievements of the Danish people in strife with their neighbours.' If we compare with it the account of Helgi's Death in the Edda, we observe a development which has been truly and finely characterised by Axel Olrik.<sup>1</sup> I repeat in substance his words: The clan-feud is now the subject of the poem; the story becomes a tragedy; it is the hero's doom which resounds in the skald's lay; thoughts of the nation scarcely appear; Helgi Hundingsbani is not here the champion of a people. 'We have the ideas of an individual on the awakening of the hero to valiant deeds, the treachery of kinsmen, and the fidelity of wives.'

As an important consideration in the development I may also add: the Helgi-lay has now become permeated with the fundamental conceptions of the Valhøll belief. The hero is led by Odin to death at the hands of his enemies, that he may come to Valhøll to dwell among the *einherjar* and to aid the gods in their last fight against the powers of destruction.

It is not easy to follow the poem on Helgi's Death in its historical development, because we lack the older Scandinavian forms of the story which most nearly preceded it. Two different forms of the Helgi-story seem to have developed from that of the Shieldings—one keeping the feud against Høthbrodd, the  
p. 204. representative of the Heathobards, in the foreground;

<sup>1</sup> See *Aarb. f. nord. Oldk.*, 1894, p. 163.

the other laying the greatest stress on the fact that the strife which Sigrún awakes, causes the death of her father Høgni and her lover Helgi.

The latter form arose under the influence of the story of the Hjathnings. Like Hild, Sigrún is made into the daughter of Høgni. Helgi carries off Sigrún against her father's will, as Hethin does Hild, and this brings about a war in which both Høgni and Helgi fall. Yet it is possible that Høgni, whom the Anglo-Saxons knew as Hagen, king of the Holmryge (at the mouth of the Weichsel), had previously been brought into connection with Heathobards and Shieldings. In H. H., II, 4, Høgni is mentioned as brother of the old Danish saga-hero Sigar.

We have already seen (pp. 184 f, above) that the Helgi-story was brought into connection with the Sigurth-story. The story of the Völsungs also affected the account of Helgi's Death. Throughout the Helgi-lays a general tendency is manifest to let the action develop in parallelism to the Sigurth-stories. The fact, then, that Sigurth (Siegfried) in the German story was killed by his wife's brother, may have led the O.N. poet to let Helgi be killed by his wife's brother. Yet the poet must also have been influenced in this decision by the prevalent Norse conceptions of just revenge. The feature of Helgi's slaying his wife's father was already present in the story: the most natural person to take vengeance was, of course, the son of the slain warrior. Further,<sup>1</sup> according to the German poem, when Siegfried's body is brought by his murderers to his wife, she breaks out into reproaches against them.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Sv. Grundtvig, *Heroisk Digtning*, p. 39.



In the Edda, when Högni announces to his sister p. 205. Guthrún the death of Sigurth,<sup>1</sup> she utters a curse on her brother.<sup>2</sup> So in the Helgi-lay, Dag is at once cursed by his sister Sigrún when he informs her of Helgi's death (II, 30-33). She reminds her brother of the oaths that he had sworn to Helgi. Similarly, the brothers of Guthrún (Kriemhild) swear oaths to Sigurth (Siegfried) in both the Scandinavian and German forms of the story;<sup>3</sup> and the Gjúkungs are reminded of these oaths after Sigurth's death.<sup>4</sup> It seems clear, therefore, that we owe the form of this part of the story in the Helgi-lay to the story of the Völsungs.

In the second Guthrún-lay (25, 33), Guthrún's mother Grimhild, together with her brothers, offer her gold and lands as atonement for Sigurth's death. Dag offers his sister Sigrún gold and lands to atone for Helgi's death.<sup>5</sup>

Just as the dead Helgi comes riding from Valhall to Sigrún, who is weeping for him, so also in the poem *Guðrúnarkvætt*, 18, 19, the sorrowing Guthrún addresses

<sup>1</sup> *Brot af Sig.*, 7; *Guðr.*, II, 7-8.

<sup>2</sup> According to *Brot*, II, it is Gunnar she curses; in *Guðr.*, II, 9, it is Högni.

<sup>3</sup> *Nibelungenlied*, ed. Lachmann, v. 334; cf. *Þiðrekssaga*, chap. 228.

<sup>4</sup> *Brot*, sts. 5, 16.

<sup>5</sup> Dag offers his sister as atonement for her husband's death (H. H., II, 35): *ell Vandilsve | ok Vigdali*. Whence the poet got the names of these places I cannot say. Finn Magnúsen suggests Vendel in Jutland. *Vigdali* resembles *Widdale*, 'a hamlet in Hawes chapelry, N.R. Yorkshire,' 4½ miles south-west of Hawes. [Is this the same place in England as *Wydale*, mentioned in Worsaae, *Minder*, p. 99?]

It is uncertain whether in *Vandilsve* we have *Wandesley*, 'a hamlet in Annesley parish, Notts; 9½ miles north-west of Nottingham' (in the Domesday-book, *Wannendeslei*). We have similar names in: 'Wensley, a village in Leyburn district, N.R. Yorkshire' (*Wandeslage* and *Wendreslaga* in D.-book); Wensley in Derby, and Wansley in Dorset.

her dead husband Sigurth and begs him to ride to her from the world of the dead, as he has promised to do. The *Guðrúnarhvot* is, however, late, and the motive in p. 206. question is clumsily joined to the Guthrún-story. Probably, therefore, we have in this instance an imitation of the Sigrún incident, and not the reverse.

The parallelism between the last section of the Sigurth-poem and that of the Helgi-lay appears most plainly in Sigrún's magnificent eulogy of the dead Helgi (H. H., II, 38), which resembles closely Guthrún's eulogy of the dead Sigurth (*Guðr.*, II, 2; I, 18). In both places the hero is likened to a hart. It seems to me<sup>1</sup> that the Helgi-lay has here imitated the Sigurth-poem (and not the reverse), both because the expressions in the Guthrún-lay appear to show the image in its inception and because the *Þiðrekssaga*, after telling of Grimhild beside Sigurth's corpse, has a eulogy of the dead Sigurth, which, to be sure, is not put in his wife's mouth, but is prefaced by the words: 'So says every man.'

Yet, while Sigrún thus corresponds in certain features to Guthrún (whose name is the same in the second part), she has also, on the other side, points of resemblance with Brynhild. Sigrún is fated to arouse strife between chieftains (H. H., II, 28); and the same may be said of Hild and Brynhild. Like Brynhild, Sigrún lives on a mountain.<sup>2</sup> Both heroines are regarded, to some extent at least, as battle-maidens. They resemble each other in the fearful strength of their love. In each case, the wife follows her loved husband in death.

<sup>1</sup> Müllenhoff and Edzardi (*Germania*, XXIII, 185) are of the opposite opinion.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. H. H., II, *frá Svafjöllum*.



The poem on the Death of Helgi and Sigrún is not, however, to be explained as having arisen solely by imitation of the stories of the Hjathnings and of Sigurth; for these do not explain fully the last section of the Helgi-story. This section, which tells of the dead hero's visit to his living wife, is identical in subject with a mediæval ballad, known in many lands and hardly yet extinct in popular tradition, viz. 'The Lover in the Grave'<sup>1</sup> (*Fæstemanden i Graven*). In both cases the subject is the same: a young man comes back from the abode of death to his loved-one, because of her tears and sorrow. He remains with her a single night, and speaks with her, but leaves her before daybreak, and does not return.

It should be mentioned that there are also some special points of agreement between the ballad and the Eddic lay. Both poems assert, for example, that the tears of the woman harass the lover in the other world. This does not harmonise with the rest of the O.N. account, in which Helgi is represented as going after death to join the company of the *einherjar* in Valhøll; and it appears to have been added to the story for the first time in our lay. The poet has combined older ideas of the life of the dead in the grave with features of the life of the *einherjar* in Valhøll (a myth created shortly before his time by the court-skalds), without being able to unite into one harmonious whole these fundamentally different conceptions.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> On its occurrence in different lands, and on related stories, see H. Hoffmann in *Altdeutsche Blätter*, I, 174 f; Uhland, *Schriften*, VIII, 200 f; Grundtvig, *Danm. gl. Folkev.*, II, 492 f; Child, *English and Scottish Pop. Ballads*, III, 226-229; P. Loewe, *Die Sage von Helgi dem Hundingsdóttir* (Strehlen, 1877).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Uhland, *Schriften*, VIII, 148 f; Schullerus, in Paul-Braune, *Beil.*, XII, 238 f.

Both the old lay and the popular ballad make the young woman *weep blood*. Helgi says to Sigrún (II, 45): 'Thou weepest bitter tears before thou goest to sleep; each one falls bloody on my breast.' In a Swedish version of the ballad (Afzelius, 6:2, v. 1), we read: 'The maiden weeps tears, she weeps blood.' In the Danish ballad (A, 17): 'Every time thou weepest for me, when thou art sad at heart, my coffin is filled with clotted blood.' Thus, in both poems the dead man is drenched with blood every time his loved-one weeps.<sup>1</sup> In the old lay, Sigrún makes a couch for Helgi in the grave-mound, and sleeps there in his embrace. In the Swedish ballad (Afz., I, v. 7; 2, v. 7), the dead youth shares a bed with his betrothed. In both poems, moreover, cocks are named in the world of the dead. In the lay it is *Salgofnir* ('the bird of the hall'), who wakes the *einherjar*. In the Danish ballad the dead lover says: 'Now crows the white cock: for the earth long all the corpses. Now crows the red cock: to the earth must all the dead [go]. Now crows the black cock: now all the gates open.'<sup>2</sup>

The day after the dead Helgi leaves his wife, Sigrún comes after sunset to the grave-mound; but she waits there in vain. 'Because of sorrow and grief Sigrún lived only a short time.' In the Swedish ballad (Afz., 6:2), the maiden sits down on the grave of the dead

<sup>1</sup> In H. H., II, 44, Sigrún says: 'Thy hair, O Helgi! is full of frost . . . How shall I find thee a remedy for this?' In the Danish ballad the maiden combs the hair of her betrothed; for every hair she arranges, she lets fall a tear. She then asks: 'How is it in the grave with thee?'

<sup>2</sup> In Danish B the white cock is not mentioned. Cf. Vpá., 43: 'The cock with the golden comb wakes the heroes in the dwelling of the Father of the Hosts; but in the halls of Hel crows another soot-red cock.'

youth who has left her. She sits there and weeps until daybreak, when she leaves the grave. She dies soon after.

Evidently, we must conclude that the Scandinavian popular ballad, 'The Lover in the Grave,' not only treats the same subject as the Eddic lay on Helgi and Sigrún, but stands in close relationship to that poem.

p. 209. As I take it, the Swedish ballad comes from the Danish (though not, of course, from one of the extant Danish forms), and the latter from England, where the ballad exists in many versions. The Eddic poem was also composed in Britain. The ballad may have arisen in England under the influence of some old Helgi-lay—hardly the one which we have, but more likely one, nearly related, which may have been the work of a Danish poet—a lay which made the dead Helgi dwell, not in the heavenly castle Valhöll among the *einherjar*, but (according to the more primitive conception) in his grave-mound.

The story of the return of a dead husband (or lover) to his surviving, inconsolable wife (or betrothed) was familiar before the time of the Eddic lay and the popular ballad, and was attached to Protesilaus, who fell before Troy, and his wife Laodamia. The form of the story which resembles most the Eddic lay is that found in the First Vatican Mythograph (I, 158): 'Laodamia,' we read, 'was the wife of Protesilaus. When she heard that he had fallen in the Trojan war, she expressed the wish that she might see his shade. Her wish was fulfilled; but she could not escape from the shade, and died in his embrace.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 'F(abula) laodomie. Laodomia uxor Prothesilai fuit. Que cum maritum in bello Troiano perire (so MS.) cognovisset, optavit, ut umbram

I conjecture that this story became known in Ireland, and that the author of Helgi's Death heard it there. He combined with it the idea that the tears of surviving friends disturb the repose of the dead—a belief which was well known among the Greeks, the Romans, and many other races.<sup>1</sup>

We may next inquire why the incident of the dead lover's return was attached to Sigrún. Of course, the fact that Sigrún, like Guthrún in the Sigurth-story, is described as a devoted wife, in despair at her husband's early death, may have been one reason for attaching to her this incident. But this explanation seems to me insufficient, and I believe that it is possible to point out a more potent cause<sup>2</sup>: the First Helgi-lay seems to have been influenced in its account of the hero's birth by the classical story of Meleager; this story, as I suppose, also influenced the poem on Helgi's Death.

After the meeting between Sigrún and the dead Helgi in the Second Lay, comes a prose note: 'Sigrún

*eius videret. Qua re concessa, non deserens umbram in amplexibus eius periit.*'—Taken from Servius, Commentary on Virgil's *Aeneid*, 6, 447. Same story in *Myth. Vatic.*, 11, 215. The story is different, however, in Hyginus, *Fables*, 103, 104 (ed. M. Schmidt, p. 95).

<sup>1</sup> See Schenkl in *Germ.*, 11, 451 f; Child, *Pop. Ballads*, 111, 235 f.

<sup>2</sup> Simrock (*Handb. d. d. Myth.*, p. 394) would unite the poetic motive that Sigrún 'ihren Geliebten, der im Kampf gefallen und zur Odhin gegangen ist, durch ihre heissen Thränen *erweckt* und herabzieht,' with the feature in the story that Hild wakes the dead to life. But Sigrún does not, like Hild, wake her dead husband to *life* again in order that he may fight, but gets him as a *dead* man to visit his grave-mound and embrace his living wife. Yet Simrock's idea is supported by the fact that in Saxo Hild awakes the dead because of longing for her husband (*Ferunt Hildam tanta mariti cupiditate flagrasse, ut noctu interfectorum manes redinte-grandi belli gratia carminibus excitasse credatur.*—Ed. Müller, Bk. v, p. 342.)



lived only a short time because of sorrow and grief'<sup>1</sup>—a note which has probably been attached to the poem from early times. Hyginus makes the same remark respecting Meleager's wife: *at coniunx eius Alcyone moerens in luctu decessit*.<sup>2</sup> It was this, I conjecture, that suggested to the O.N. poet the manner of Sigrún's death.

p. 211. The usual classical account—that Meleager's death was caused by his mother, who threw into the fire the brand with which his life was bound up—has left no trace in the Helgi-lay. Perhaps the O.N. poet became familiar with a different version of Meleager's death, based on some late and corrupt Latin redaction. In *Myth. Vatic.*, I, 198, we read of *sorores Meleagri illum a fratre Tydeo interfectum intolerabiliter flentes*.<sup>3</sup> According to this, Meleager would appear to have been killed by his own brother; and with this version our account of the slaying of Helgi may be connected. That the O.N. poet represented Helgi as killed, not by his own brother, but by his wife's, may be due to the influence of the Völsung-story.<sup>4</sup>

The Helgi-poet, then, knew that Meleager's wife died

<sup>1</sup> *Sigrún varð skammlíf af harmi ok trega.*

<sup>2</sup> *Fables*, ed. M. Schmidt, 174, p. 29.

<sup>3</sup> The story in *Myth. Vatic.*, I, 198, is taken from Schol. to Statius, *Theb.*, 4, 103; p. 123, and to 8, 483; p. 294. The addition *a fratre Tydeo interfectum* is a late corruption, which probably arose from the story that Tydeus killed his brother Melanippus (in Schol. to Statius, *Theb.*, 1, 402 and 280).

<sup>4</sup> It is doubtless an accidental agreement that the lover in the fifth novel of the fourth day in the *Decameron*, who showed himself after death to his desolate loved-one, had been killed by her brothers; accidental also, doubtless, that the loved-one in Boccaccio is called *Lisabetta*, and in the Danish ballad *Else*.

of grief at the loss of her husband, and also that certain female relatives of his wept inconsolably over his death. Following a suggestion derived from these two incidents, he transferred to Helgi and Sigrún the main feature of the story of Protesilaus and Laodamia—the inconsolable wife who wishes for the return of her slain husband, and who sleeps in his arms when her wish has been fulfilled.

Helgi's Death also shows relationship with the Völsung-stories in their O.N. form, in that the same religious conception permeated both, and that Odin affects the action both in the Helgi-lays and in the Völsung-stories. Yet in the Helgi-story Odin does not appear personally in the world of mortals.

In the Second Lay we are told that Helgi is killed p. 212 by Sigrún's brother, *und Fjöturlundi*, 'under the fetter-tree.' In the prose he is called *Dag*, and it is said that he had invoked Odin (*blótaði Óðin*) to get revenge for his father, and that Odin had lent him his own spear. The preposition *und*, 'under,' in the expression *und Fjöturlundi* seems to show that *lundr* here means 'tree.' *Fjöturlundi* seems to be a name invented by the poet, signifying 'a tree of sacrifice to which the victim is bound with a *fjöturr*, fetter.' By using this place-name the poet meant to indicate that Helgi was killed as an offering to Odin. He is pierced with Odin's spear, just as Vikar is pierced with the spear lent to Starkath by Odin.

Odin's relation to Helgi is analogous to his relation to the Völsung Sigmund. Odin himself goes with his spear against Sigmund in the hero's last fight (*Völs. s.*, chap. xi.); and, in the *Eiríksmál*, Odin in Valhöll bids

Sigmund and Sinfjötli go to meet King Eric Blood-axe.<sup>1</sup>

I have already shown that the author of Helgi's Death, like the author of the First Helgi-lay, lived in Britain, and understood both English and Irish. Apparently (as the phrase *at Jordán* (II, 28) seems to show) he had heard some Christian stories. But he is far from being so much influenced by Irish literature as the author of the First Helgi-lay, and he has not the character of a learned poet.<sup>2</sup>

It is hard to say exactly what difference in age there is between Helgi's Death, in its present form, and the First Helgi-lay; but if my conjecture be right that the author of Helgi's Death altered A.S. *on eorðan*, 'on the earth,' into 'by Jordan,' this poem probably dates at the earliest from the middle of the tenth century.

p. 213. The author of Helgi's Death may, then, have been a skald at Ólaf Kvaran's court. If so, we have an easy and natural explanation for the fact that he understood both Irish and English, and that a Danish heroic story forms the basis of his lay, which was influenced in its construction both by English verse and by Latin mythical tales.

I regard it as certain that this poet was by nationality Norwegian, not Danish. The connection of his work with the O.N. poems, to which I have already called attention, argues in favour of this view—likewise the poetic phraseology, and some of the kennings employed. Moreover, the highly developed conception

<sup>1</sup> This is a support for the reading of the MSS. in H. H., II, 29, where Hunding is addressed in Valhöll by Helgi.

<sup>2</sup> This would not prevent his hearing stories based on classical traditions,



of Odin and Valhøll cannot in this form be shown to be really Danish.<sup>1</sup>

It seems probable, however, that the poet knew and utilised older Danish verses composed in Britain. The name of the hero Helgi, and his position in the poem; the name Høthbrodd, as I have explained it (above, p. 159 ff); the name of the 'king' Starkath, Høthbrodd's ally, and the place-name *Hlébjörg*—all support this theory. I have tried to show that it was a Danish poet in Britain who first sang of Helgi as the slayer of Høthbrodd.

That the Danes in England in later times, at all events up to about 1200, also knew an old lay on Helgi's love, his tragic death, and his return from the grave, we may infer from the popular ballads of 'Ribold,' 'Herr Hjelmmer,' 'The Lover in the Grave,' and the corresponding ballads in English and Scotch. In my discussion of the Lay of Helgi Hjörvarthsson I shall examine these ballads more minutely, and try to decide whether it was an Old Norse or a corresponding Old Danish lay which influenced the ballad of Ribold and Guldborg in England.

It is hard to decide what district of Norway was the home of the author of Helgi's Death. The most likely supposition is that he lived in the south-western part.<sup>2</sup>

In the description of Sigrún's grief on hearing the tidings of her lover's death, there is an intense passion

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Olrik, *Saksnes Oldhist.*, 1, 30-36.

<sup>2</sup> The word *dagsbrúin* in H. H., II, 43, is now used, according to Ivar Aasen, 'in Sogn and other places'; *hella* in II, 44, is now used in Bergen's Stift, Ryfylke, Agder, Telemarken, Hallingdalen, Gudbrandsdalen, etc. With *difrekr* in II, 43, cf. *matfrek*, which is now used in Telemarken and elsewhere.

which has been thought to be genuinely Scandinavian, or even primitive Germanic in its character. To Helgi, the mighty warrior, Sigrún looks up with admiration, and she even seeks him on the battlefield among the corpses of her relatives. Yet she is gentle and mild, of quite different nature from Hild, who, as Hogni's daughter, is her prototype, and who wakes her father and her lover from the sleep of death to perpetual fight. When Helgi, after the death of Sigrún's relatives, says to her: 'It was destined that thou shouldst cause strife between chieftains,' she bursts into tears; and when Helgi, by way of consolation, adds that no one can withstand fate, she exclaims: 'I should now be willing to call to life those who are dead, if I could nevertheless hide myself in thy bosom.'

In Helgi's Death the hero also is much more human than the impersonal victor of the First Lay. Even on the battlefield, after the defeat of his opponents, he is sad rather than exultant; for the corpses about him are those of his loved-one's kin. His first words to her are half reproachful: 'Thou hast not fortune with thee in all; yet I say that the Norns cause something.' In this we may note the presentiment of his death.

We perceive, moreover, that this poem, where delight in nature shows itself so clearly in beautiful pictures, p. 215. where the poet sings of the all-subduing power of the love of an affectionate, devoted woman, was produced in a sunnier land than the rugged mountains of Iceland and Norway. The ancient Norse spirit was here affected by that conception of life which later got its peculiar and full expression in the ballads of the Middle Ages, most completely in England, Scotland, and Denmark.

When Sigrún likens Helgi to a hart, the comparison broadens out into the picture of a landscape. We are reminded of the ballads. The chaste presentation of affection has, indeed, all the Old Norse seriousness; but the passionate love of the hero, and (more especially) of the heroine, with the joy of the latter in the presence of her lover, fills the poem so fully that it is as a forerunner of the conception of a later era regarding the relations between man and woman. While this instance of the return of a departed hero stands almost alone in ancient poems, there is a whole series of ballads in which a dead man is brought back to the side of his surviving love by her inconsolable longing, need of help, or passion—or in order to give a warning.

All this makes against the view that the Lay of Helgi's Death was composed by an Icclander. It has been said that the practical, prosaic, sober spirit of the Icclanders pervades all their intellectual productions.<sup>1</sup> It is with an entirely different spirit that the Lay of Helgi's Death is filled.

The considerations here adduced show also that the lay was not composed in Norway but in Britain, where the Norwegian poet associated with Englishmen, Danes, and Celts,—in Britain, where the tones of the popular ballad were soon to be heard clear and full of fervour, gay and pleasing, yet with undertones of deep melancholy.

That the Lay of Helgi's Death stands in some connection with Danish poetry is evident also from the fact that all-conquering love is the common poetic theme of a series of old Danish stories, some of which

<sup>1</sup> See Finnur Jónsson, *Litt. Hist.*, 1, 50.

are recounted of persons (*e.g.* Sigar) who bear the same  
p. 216. names as persons who were also associated with Helgi.<sup>1</sup>

With respect to the poetic form of the story, the poems united under the general heading of 'The Second Helgi-lay' stand in strong contrast, on the one hand, to the treatment of the Shielding-story in *Beowulf*, and, on the other, to the account in the First Helgi-lay. This difference has not hitherto been explained with sufficient clearness, because the strophes of the Second Lay have, too one-sidedly, been treated as fragments.

Let us examine the Lay of Helgi's Death in H. H., II, 25-51. All of these strophes were, without any doubt, composed by one and the same poet. The theory that they are fragments of a Helgi-poem which treated its subject throughout in versified form and with continuous strophes, like the First Helgi-lay, seems to me incapable of proof and incorrect. The author of the Lay of Helgi's Death has, on the contrary, treated in lyric-dramatic strophes a series of separate and distinct scenes in such a way that the situation is made clear, and the inner connection explained, by the remarks of the characters. The prose narrative united the versified parts.

These prose passages were an original and necessary part of the work. Of course, in saying this I do not mean that all the bits of prose in the old MS. are as old as the strophes, or that the prose preserves details of phraseology in as pure and original a form as the poetry. Some of the bits of prose are inserted to replace strophes whose verse-form had been forgotten.

<sup>1</sup> See Olrik, *Saksas Oldhist.*, II, 230 ff.

Other bits communicate nothing more than inferences drawn from strophes contained in the MS., and some express ideas which are later than those which appear in the strophes. In general, the phraseology of prose changes much more readily than that of verse. But in point of principle, in works like that on Helgi's Death, the prose narrative element is, as regards the poetic p. 217 form of presentation, quite as original as the lyric-dramatic strophes.<sup>1</sup> This appears plainly, for example, in the scene in Valhöll (H. H., II, 39), where Hunding is bidden to perform menial duties. Here an explanation is needed, in order that the strophes may be understood, and there is nothing to show that this necessary explanation was ever given in verse-form.

Heinzel has already called attention to the fact that it is a characteristic of Helgi's Death, as opposed to the First Lay, that the account of the battle is given in prose, but that the poet afterwards makes Sigrún and Helgi appear on the battlefield and express in strophes the feelings aroused by the outcome of the combat.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, however, 'the Old Lay of the Völsungs' (H. H., II, 14-18), has narrative strophes. To judge from the fragmentary remains, this lay was a much less significant work than that on Helgi's Death.

<sup>1</sup> I reserve the discussion of the origin of this poetic mode of presentation for another occasion.

<sup>2</sup> Heinzel (*Über die Hervararsaga*, p. 43) says: 'Es ist nicht beweisbar, dass die Prosatheile der Eddalieder durchaus jünger seien als die Verse.' This view, which F. Jónsson (*Litt. Hist.*, I, 246) regards as 'altogether inconceivable,' I believe to be entirely correct.

Müllenhoff (*Ztsch. f. d. Alt.*, XXIII, 151) says very truly: 'Zwei Formen der epischen Überlieferung, prosaische Erzählung mit bedeutsamen



I refrain from making any definite conjecture as to  
 p. 218. the exact point where the Lay of Helgi's Death  
 began; but it seems to me certain that something  
 preceded the account of the battle which Helgi won  
 over Høthbrodd and Høgni and their kinsmen. The  
 work is but fragmentarily preserved.

## XVIII

THE STORY OF KING HJØRVARTH AND HIS SON  
HELGI.

THE First Lay of Helgi Hundingsbani is followed in the old MS. by a section entitled 'On Hjørvarth and Sigrlinn.' This contains various matters concerning King Hjørvarth, among them the story (part prose, part verse) how he got Sigrlinn to wife.

We are then told (in prose and in verse) of Helgi, the son of Hjørvarth and Sigrlinn. He grew up and became strong and handsome; but he was silent and received no name. Once, while he was sitting on a hill, Sváfa, the daughter of Eylimi, came riding to him with her maidens. She gave him a name, and therewith a marvellous sword as a name-gift. She was a

Reden—Wechsel- oder Einzelreden—der handelnden Personen in poetischer Fassung und erzählende epische Lieder in vollständig durchgeführter strophischer Form finden wir . . . im Norden neben einander im Gebrauch und keineswegs ist die Prosa der gemischten Form bloss eine Auflösung oder ein späterer Ersatz der gebundenen Rede.' Cf. Kögel, *Gesch. d. d. Litt.*, 1, 98. On the contrary, Sijmon's view in Paul-Braune (*Beit.*, IV, 168), is incapable of proof and erroneous. He says: 'Zunächst ist die Prosa des zweiten Liedes von Helgi Hund. für uns ganz ohne Wert.'

valkyrie who rode through the air and over the sea, and she afterwards acted as his protectress in fight.

Helgi got from his father people and ships for an expedition against King Hróthmar, who had killed Helgi's grandfather. He slew Hróthmar with the sword which he had received from Sváfa. He also killed the giant Hati. Then comes a poem in the metre *ljóðaháttir* on an encounter between Helgi and his watchman Atli and the sea-troll Hríngerth, Hati's daughter.

The last section of the Lay of Helgi Hjorvarthsson contains, like the first, both prose and verse (in *fornyrðislag*). Helgi and Sváfa swear to be faithful to each other. Helgi sets out alone on a warlike expedition. He is challenged to fight by Hróthmar's son Alf. His attendant spirit (*fylgja*), who knows that he is to fall in this approaching combat, meets, one Christmas p. 219. Eve, in the form of a witch, Helgi's brother Hethin, who is at home with his father in Norway, and offers to become his attendant spirit. When Hethin rejects her, she takes her revenge by confusing his mind to such an extent that in the evening he vows a sacred oath on the brag-beaker to win Sváfa, his brother's beloved. Afterwards Hethin regrets his vow, and wanders about in desolate regions. In a foreign land he meets Helgi, and sorrowfully tells him of his oath. Helgi, who has a foreboding of his fate, says that after his death Hethin's vow shall be fulfilled. Helgi is fatally wounded in the fight with Alf. He then sends a message to Sváfa, who comes to his deathbed. Helgi begs her to become Hethin's bride; but Sváfa answers that she has vowed, when Helgi shall die, to have no chieftain



who is not famous. In the last strophe, Hethin begs Sváfa to kiss him, declaring that he will not return to his home until he has revenged Helgi, who was the best chieftain in the world. The following sentence in prose is added: 'It is said that Helgi and Sváfa were born again.' Thereupon a new section, entitled 'On the Volsungs,' begins with the words: 'The son of King Sigmund the Volsung was married to Borghild from Brálund. They called their son Helgi, after Helgi Hjörvarthsson.'

We must not forget that it is only in the prose bits that Sváfa is called a valkyrie. It is only in the Lay on Hrímgérth, which is in *ljóðaháttr*, and in the prose fragments, that she is represented as a supernatural woman, who rides at the head of a company of maidens through the air and over the sea, and who protects Helgi in storm and in battle. The verses in *fornyrðislag* represent Sváfa as a woman, entirely human in nature, but yet as giving to Helgi a name and a sword.

## XIX

THE MEETING OF THE MERMAID HRÍMGÉRTH WITH  
ATLI AND HELGI HJÖRVARTHSSON.

## I

p. 220. THE poem on Helgi Hjörvarthsson and Sváfa includes a lay, in dialogue, which is composed in *ljóðaháttr*. We may call the lay *Hrímgérðarmál* after one of its characters, the troll or mermaid Hrímgérth.

Hrímgérth comes in the night to Helgi's ship, which

lies in the harbour after a storm. The watchman Atli is on guard while the others sleep. She first converses with Atli, and afterwards wakes Helgi himself. She demands Helgi's love as a recompense for his having killed her father. But she is kept talking until day dawns, so that, when the rays of the sun fall upon her, she changes into stone there in the harbour.

Hrímgérth is a disgusting troll.<sup>1</sup> She has a tail like a mare. Her father Hati (*i.e.* the hostile pursuer) was a mountain-giant, who ravished many women. Her mother was a sea-troll. Both Hrímgérth and her mother are accustomed to attack ships at sea and to sink them, so that all the crew are drowned. Hrímgérth herself fights with men and kills them, afterwards devouring their dead bodies.

The poet's description of the sea-troll agrees in many respects with the stories of mermaids and similar beings in Scandinavian documents of the Middle Ages and in stories gathered from the peasantry in modern times; for the belief in mermaids has long been prevalent on the Scandinavian coast.

Like Hrímgérth, mermaids are described in other old p. 221. Icelandic and Norwegian documents as disgusting trolls, even when they have a shape which is partly human. The old name for mermaid, *margýgr*, itself shows that such beings were popularly conceived as giantesses. In the *Konungs Skuggsjá*<sup>2</sup> such a creature is called a *skrimsl* (*i.e.* terrible witch, monster), and is said to have a disgusting, terrifying face. In more recent popular

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *leið ertu mannkyni*, H. IIj., 21. She is called *skass*, *gífr*, *fdla*, *hdla*.

<sup>2</sup> Christiania edition, chap. 16, p. 39.

stories, which emphasise the alluring and infatuating powers of the mermaid, she appears more often as a beautiful woman, but in Gotland she is described as ugly behind. Hrímgærth has not that power of alluring song which Scandinavian popular superstition, both in the Middle Ages and in modern times, ascribes to mermaids, but which is merely their inheritance from the sirens.

The mermaid is usually described, both in the Middle Ages and in modern times, as shaped like a fish in her nether parts. Hrímgærth, on the contrary, has a tail like a mare, and longs for the neighing stallion. The description of the *margýgr* in the story of St. Ólaf in the *Flateyjarbók*<sup>1</sup> is somewhat similar. She has a head like a horse, with ears erect and distended nostrils, big green eyes and fearful jaws. She has shoulders like a horse, and hands in front; but behind she resembles a serpent.

As regards Hrímgærth's mare's-tail, I may also point out that, according to popular belief in Gotland, the mermaid is the same being as the *skogs-nua*, or wood-nymph<sup>2</sup>; for in Norway the latter ('*huldren*') has an animal's tail, usually that of a cow, or, like Guro Rysserova in *Aaskereiën* (Arthur's Chase), a horse's rump.

Hrímgærth, like the Gotland mermaid and the wood-nymph, is desirous of sexual intercourse with mortal men, and, like them, seeks to win young men's love. In Iceland, as in Gotland, it is still a popular superstition that the mermaid (*hafgýgr*, *meyfiskr*) loves

<sup>1</sup> II, 25 f; *Fornmannasögur*, v, 162-164.

<sup>2</sup> P. A. Säve, *Hafvets och fiskarens Säger*, Visby, 1880, p. 15 f.

to look at young boys, and comes to them when they lie in their boats asleep.<sup>1</sup> In like manner, Hrímgrerth comes to Helgi's ship when the crew on board are asleep.

In Gotland it is believed that the mermaid prefers boys who have a sweetheart. So Hrímgrerth, when she visits Helgi, knows that Sváfa is his love.

In many stories of mermaids they are said, like Hrímgrerth and her mother, to appear in storms at sea, and to wreck ships so that the crews are drowned. The sea-troll, Grendel's mother, in *Beowulf*, like Hrímgrerth, devours human bodies greedily.

At sunrise Hrímgrerth is changed into stone. Modern Scandinavian popular tradition preserves tales in which various monsters, usually mountain-trolls, are, like Hrímgrerth, invited to look to the east. The popular belief that trolls, or giants, being creatures of darkness, are changed into stone by the sun or the light of day is known throughout the world.<sup>2</sup> In the Eddic poem *Alvissmál* it is hinted that the dwarf All-wise, who, like Hrímgrerth, is kept talking until daylight, is thereby changed into stone.

But in no other popular Scandinavian tale, so far as I know, does a mermaid really become stone. In the Faroes a similar being, the sea-sprite (*sjódreypur*), is

<sup>1</sup> Arnason, *Islenskar þjóðsögur*, I, 131; Maurer, *Isländische Volkssagen*, p. 30.

<sup>2</sup> In addition to the places cited by E. H. Meyer in *German. Mythol.*, § 181, see e.g. Landstad, *Norske Folkeviser*, p. 42; *Ein Sogebundel*, p. 62; Friis, *Lapp. Eventyr*, 145; Maurer, *Isl. Volkssagen*, pp. 52 f; Simrock, *Mythol.*, 392; Kuhn, *Herabkunft des Feuers*, p. 93; Liebrecht in *Germ.*, XVI, 218: on the Fidschi Isles; Liebrecht on Gervasius, 83: among the primitive settlers in Hispaniola.

said to appear often on the outlying rocks after sunset. If when morning begins to break he finds himself a captive, he begs the men who have found him to let him loose, and when the sun rises from the sea he dissolves into thin air.<sup>1</sup> But he is not turned into stone.

Hrímgerth has traits of both mountain-troll and mermaid. p. 223. Atli says to her: 'The ogre Lothin (shaggy) who dwells in Tholley, the worst of mountain-giants (*hraunbúa*), he is a fit husband for thee.' Her father Hati is called a giant; he was killed while sitting on a cliff in the fjord where Helgi and Atli were lying with their ships. It is, therefore, quite in accordance with her father's nature as a mountain giant that Hrímgerth should be turned into stone.

We could believe that the lay of Hrímgerth and her kin grew up naturally in the circle in which the poem was composed. The poet doubtless lived in Viking times among chieftains who, like Helgi, had been tossed about on the sea. It was not unnatural, therefore, for a fight with a sea-troll to be regarded by him as an essential feature in the life of a typical hero.

Certain later O.N. heroes also overcome mermaids. A story which seems to have been written down by Styrmer,<sup>2</sup> in the first half of the thirteenth century, makes St. Ólaf shoot his spear through a mermaid who attacks his ship in the mouth of a river,<sup>3</sup> just as Hrímgerth's mother, who had put herself in the mouth

<sup>1</sup> Hammershaimb, *Ant. Tidskrift*, 1849-51, p. 199; and, from this, Niels Winther, *Færøernes Oldtidshistorie*, p. 365; *Færøsk Anthologi*, 1, 336.

<sup>2</sup> G. Storm, *Snorre Sturlesøn's Hist.*, p. 159.

<sup>3</sup> *Óláfssaga helga*, Christiania, 1849, chap. 14; *Fornmannasögur*, IV, 56 f; *Flat.*, II, 25 f = Fms., V, 162-164.

of the fjord before Helgi's ships, was pierced by a pole (*þvari*).

Ketil Høng meets, among the islands off the coast far up in the north, a troll black as pitch. She has just risen from the sea, and wishes to kill him; but he shoots her with one of his magic arrows, and with a great clamour she sinks into the sea and departs in the form of a whale.<sup>1</sup> We have an echo of this story in the Swedish tale of Kettil Runsk, who binds a mermaid p. 224. with his runic block,<sup>2</sup> and perhaps also in the Danish ballad of 'Herr Luno,' who in the sea near Greenland binds a mermaid with runes.<sup>3</sup> In the late Scandinavian popular ballad 'Magnus and the Mermaid,'<sup>4</sup> the mermaid, who is here a beautiful woman, lures the knight gently and enticingly with rich gifts; and it is only the crowing of the cock that saves him.

## II

It can be proved, however, that the author of the Hrímgert-hlay must have known older traditions, and that he relied on literary models for some of the features in his poem.

The Lay of H. Hjør., in the old MS., ends with the words: 'It is said that Helgi and Sváfa were born again.' Directly after comes the statement that King Sigmund, the son of Völsung, and his wife Borghild,

<sup>1</sup> *Ketils s. Høngs*, chap. 5; *Fornald. ss.*, II, 127-131.

<sup>2</sup> G. O. Hylten-Cavallius, *Sägner om Kettil Runsk* in *Läsning för Folket*, 8th year, Stockholm, 1842, p. 171.

<sup>3</sup> S. Grundtvig, *Danm. gl. Folkeviser*, No. 43 (II, 92 f).

<sup>4</sup> In S. Bugge, *Gamle Norske Folkeviser*, No. 11, where corresponding ballads among other Scandinavian peoples are cited.



called their son Helgi after Helgi Hjörvarthsson. And later, when the valkyrie Sigrún, who became the love of Sigmund's son, is first named, the following remark is added: 'She was the re-born Sváfa.'

Here, then, we have the idea expressed that Helgi Hjörvarthsson and his loved-one, the valkyrie Sváfa, came to life again in the form of Helgi Hundingsbani and his loved-one, the valkyrie Sigrún. If now, with reference to this idea (which is not found in the poems themselves), we compare the First Lay of H. Hund. with the Lay of H. Hjör., we discover that the *poetic presentation* in the two poems bears the stamp of close relationship throughout. In the *form of the story* also the two show clearly intentional parallelism in many respects. This parallelism, however, is particularly noticeable in Hrímgærth's conversation with Atli, which was purposely made similar to the conversation between Guthmund and Sinfjötli in the First Helgi-lay.<sup>1</sup>

p. 225. The conversation with Hrímgærth is preceded by the following events: Helgi Hjör. comes sailing with his fleet. The ships are near foundering. Then come three companies, of nine maidens each, riding through the air, Sváfa, Helgi's loved-one, at their head. She protects the ships so that in the evening the fleet lies safely in the harbour. The conversation with Guthmund is preceded by similar events. Helgi Hund. comes sailing with his fleet in a violent storm, in which the ships are in great danger of foundering. Then come nine (perhaps in the original text three times nine) valkyries riding through the air. Sigrún, Helgi's loved-

<sup>1</sup> This has already been pointed out by Simrock in the notes to his translation, and by Sijmons in Paul-Braune, *Beit.*, IV, 171.



one, the most famous of the valkyries, protects the ships so that in the evening they lie safely in the harbour.

The situation in H. Hjør. when the conversation with Hrímgérth begins, resembles closely that in H. Hund. when the conversation with Guthmund begins. In the former case it is Helgi Hjør.'s most distinguished follower who is watchman of the ships which lie near the shore; in the latter it is the most distinguished follower of Helgi Hund. In both poems an enemy comes towards the ship—in one case Hrímgérth, in the other Guthmund; in the former as night is coming on, in the latter in the evening. In both the visitor inquires the name of the foreign king whose fleet lies in the harbour. The king's watchman, who is on guard, gives Helgi's name, and answers boldly that his king has nothing to fear from the questioner. In both the conversation is coarse, consisting for the most part of outrageous words of abuse. The king, Helgi, who in neither case takes part in it until it has lasted some time, is in both cases represented as a man of noble, high-minded nature, as a chieftain of humanity and refinement. This is brought out conspicuously in Sinfjötli's conversation with Guthmund, and in Atli's with Hrímgérth, through the contrast with the king's watchman, who is of a vulgar nature. He has had encounters with witches before, and can be rough and wild. p. 226.

In these two conversations there are even agreements in details. Guthmund, like Hrímgérth, is reproached with being a *skass*, a witch. Sinfjötli accuses Guthmund of having been a mare, and Hrímgérth is a monster

with mare's tail, whom the stallion can follow neighing. Guthmund is told that he (as a she-wolf) has given birth to young wolves, and Hrímgrerth's father is called Hati, a name which occurs in the *Grímnismál* as that of a wolf. Guthmund retorts that Sinfjötli has been castrated; Hrímgrerth reproaches Atli with the same thing. In the conversation with Hrímgrerth the place-name *Varinsvík* occurs, in that with Guthmund *Varinsey*, just as in H. H., I, 26, it is said that Helgi with his fleet sails from *Varins-fjord* to Guthmund's land.

There are, further, close linguistic agreements between the two poems. In both, those who are drowned are said to go to Rán.<sup>1</sup> In both, it is not until after the conversation which we have discussed that Helgi marries the valkyrie.

The word-combat between Sinfjötli and Guthmund is doubtless older as a poetic motive than the conversation with Hrímgrerth. This appears from the different and certainly older retorts<sup>2</sup> exchanged between Sinfjötli and Guthmund, as recorded in the Second Helgi-lay. In that record, the conversation between Sinfjötli and Guthmund has no particular resemblance to that between Atli and Hrímgrerth. The sustained parallelism first p. 227. appears in the altered and lengthened treatment contained in the *First* Helgi-lay. In what follows I shall try to show that it was one and the same poet who composed the Hrímgrerth-lay (*Hrímgrerðarmál*), i.e. the

<sup>1</sup> H. Hj., 18; H. H., I, 30. In H. Hj., 29, we must read *lofðungs flota* by analogy with *lofðungs floti* in H. H., I, 27.

<sup>2</sup> These begin with Guthmund's words, *Hverr er skjöldungr*, and end with Sinfjötli's, *þat er þér blíðara en brimís dómur* (H. H., II, 19-22); cf. my edition, p. 201.

conversation of Atli and Helgi with Hrímgærth, and the retorts which are exchanged between Guthmund and Sinfjötli in the First Lay of Helgi Hundingsbani.

To some extent (but, in my opinion, to a very limited extent), the conversation with Hrímgærth is an imitation of that with Guthmund. For in the older treatment of the story of Helgi Hund. (among the verses which are now collected under the name of the Second Lay) Sinfjötli also pours out unmeasured reproaches upon Guthmund; and here Helgi Hund. likewise appears after the dispute.

But in the Helgi-lay the king's watchman on guard converses with another man, his enemy, not with a witch. The Lay of Helgi Hund. does not explain the presence of the witch Hrímgærth. It throws no light on the way in which the story so developed that Helgi, accompanied by Atli, slays Hati, and changes Hrímgærth, Hati's daughter, into stone.

### III

In what precedes, I have shown that legendary motives have been transferred to Helgi Hundingsbani from a hero who corresponded to the South-Germanic Wolf-dietrich. I have, moreover, called attention to the intimate relationship which exists between the poems on Helgi Hundingsbani and Helgi Hjörvarthsson. Since now Wolfdietrich, like Helgi Hjör., has a meeting with a sea-troll, we have *a priori* grounds for supposing that the motive which is associated with the German hero stands in historic connection with the similar episode in the life of Helgi Hjör.

p. 228. In Wfd. A, the hero, being tired, falls asleep in a meadow by the sea-shore,<sup>1</sup> where the billows are beating against the stone cliffs. There comes up out of the depths of the sea a disgusting troll in the form of a woman, with skin covered with scales, and overgrown with long sea-grass. She wakes him, and they begin to converse. She says that she would fain help him, and begs him to marry her; but he answers: 'The Devil's dam shall not come into my arms.' Thereupon she changes into one of the most beautiful of women, radiant as the sun. But Woldietrich says that he has sworn never to marry any woman until he has freed his men from captivity. Then she begs him to give her one of his brothers instead. She will carry him with her to the bottom of the sea, for she rules over all which the sea covers. She shows Woldietrich his way; and he leaves her (A, 465-505).

Wfd. B recounts a corresponding adventure: Woldietrich and his men, being pursued by enemies, are obliged to flee to a forest. They come to a green pasture, where the men lie down to sleep, while Woldietrich himself keeps watch. Then comes Else the hairy (*rûhe*) to him, on all-fours like a bear. She begs him to grant her his love, and promises him in return a kingdom. But he answers: 'I will not love thee, thou devilish woman (*du vâlantinne rîch*). Go to Hell.' Thereupon she casts a spell over Woldietrich, so that he is long out of his mind. Finally, however, she springs into a rejuvenating fountain, and becomes a

<sup>1</sup> In this redaction the poet probably thought of a lake in the vicinity of Berchtesgaden in Upper Bavaria; see *Ztsch. f. d. Alt.*, xii, 508 f. But in the original story it was doubtless the sea-shore which was meant.

most beautiful woman. She receives in baptism the name Sigminne, and Wolddietrich, who is also restored, marries her.

With this adventure of Wolddietrich the encounter between Helgi Hjör. and the mermaid Hrímgert is, in my opinion, connected. Hrímgert is a disgusting troll, like the woman who meets Wolddietrich. This woman p. 229. has her home, according to A, in the water, and was doubtless originally regarded as a mermaid like Hrímgert. The troll, in Wfd. B, is shaggy; and Helgi says that the mountain-giant, Lothin (*i.e.* shaggy), will be a fit husband for Hrímgert. She is designated as *fála* (H. Hj., 16; cf. 13), and that word seems to be related to *vállantinne*, an expression used of the troll in Wfd. B, 310.

In Wfd. A, the troll comes to the hero when he is asleep and wakes him; in Wfd. B, she comes when his men sleep and he alone is watching. Hrímgert comes when Helgi and all his men, except Atli, are asleep. She says to Helgi: 'Wake up! If I get to sleep one night with thee, then shall I have recompense for my sorrow' (H. Hj., 24). In Wfd. B, 309, the troll says to the hero, *nu minne mich, Woldietrich*. Helgi answers: 'Lothin is he called who shall marry thee, thou who art loathsome to men; the worst mountain-giant is a fit husband for thee.'<sup>1</sup> And the troll is answered similarly in B, 316: 'The Devil shall sleep with thee.' The curse *du hebe dich zuo der helle*, B, 310, corresponds to Atli's words to Hrímgert (H. Hj., 16): 'Nine leagues shouldst thou be under the earth.'

<sup>1</sup> *Löðinn heitir er þik skal eiga . . . sá býr í þolleyju þurs*, H. Hj., 25, seems to presuppose: *Hrímgrímnir heitir þurs, er þik hasa skal*, *Skirnismál*, 35.



It is, however, only in the conversation with Helgi that the Hrímgérth-lay shows any real agreement with the episode of the mermaid in the Wolsfdietrich-story. In the latter there is no parallel to the conversation of Hrímgérth with Helgi's watchman Atli. The *dénouement* is different in the two stories.

And, finally, while the mermaid in the Wolsfdietrich-story is changed into a most beautiful woman, whom the hero marries, the troll Hrímgérth, in the story of Helgi Hjör., is contrasted with the radiant Sváfa, whom Helgi marries. To explain these variations, we must examine certain other stories which are connected with that of Else.

## IV

- p. 230. The story of the wandering Wolsfdietrich's meeting with the mermaid (called also queen in A), or '*die rúhe*' Else, who is changed into the beautiful Sigminne, has, in my opinion, borrowed features from the story of the relations between the wandering Odysseus and various supernatural female beings.

In Wfd. B, the hairy Else comes to Wolsfdietrich and urges him repeatedly to grant her his love. When she finds that he will not accede to her request, she casts a spell over him, so that he lives half a year in the forest out of his mind. *But then an angel speaks to her, and says that if she does not release him from the spell, thunder shall kill her within three days.* When she again offers Wolsfdietrich her love, he says that he will marry her if she will be baptized. She then takes him on a ship across the sea to her kingdom. There she is rejuvenated in a fountain which is half warm, half cold, becomes

the most beautiful of women, and in baptism receives the name Sigminne. Woldietrich, who is also rejuvenated in the fountain, marries her, and lives with her for a time, without thinking of his captured men. When, finally, he decides to depart to fight with Ortnit, she makes a splendid ship ready for him, and brings on board a shirt possessed of curative powers.

On the one hand, these legendary features were affected by the story of Calypso.

After having sailed between Scylla and Charybdis Odysseus comes to the beautiful sea-nymph, Calypso, in the wooded isle Ogygia. She promises Odysseus eternal youth if he will live with her, and even retains him by force. The hero remains with Calypso several years; but in the day-time he sits by the sea-shore, full of longing, lamenting his fate. *Hermes brings to Calypso a command from Zeus to set Odysseus free, and let him sail home: otherwise Zeus's anger shall overtake her.* Then Calypso helps Odysseus to build a fleet, in p. 231. which he sails away. She gives him sweet-scented garments, such as the immortals wear.

The author of Wfd. B seems himself to hint that he was here influenced by the story of Odysseus, for the hairy Else is said to live *z'alten Troyen*. This doubtless means that she is the same person as Calypso, with whom Odysseus, who came from 'old Troy,' remained for a time.<sup>1</sup>

On the other hand, the story of Woldietrich's meet-

<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, I will not affirm that the name *rûch Else* arose through *rûch \*Celse, \*Calise* (cf. *Calixa* in Benolt de Ste. More), from a romance or mediæval-Latin form of *Calypso*. Yet, so far as I know, the name has not as yet been explained.



ing with the mermaid was probably influenced by the story of Circe, the beautiful daughter of the Sun, in the isle *Ææa*, who was similar in nature to Calypso, and in origin practically identical.

In Wfd. B, Else casts a spell over Wolddietrich, so that he wanders about mad in the forest, and lives on the fruits of the earth. Circe changes Odysseus's followers by magic into grovelling swine, and gives the hero himself a magic potion, with the same end in view.<sup>1</sup>

Following the directions of Hermes, Odysseus threatens Circe, and is protected from her wiles. Thereupon he lies with her. He is strengthened when with her by bathing in warm water.<sup>2</sup> But he will taste  
p. 232. neither meat nor drink until Circe frees his followers. She restores them to human form, making them at the same time younger and more beautiful than before. Odysseus remains with Circe a year.

In Wfd. A, before Wolddietrich comes to the mermaid, he hears a voice which echoes through mountain

<sup>1</sup> But the incident of Else's cutting two locks of hair from Wolddietrich while he sleeps, and changing him to a madman, was doubtless influenced by the story of Dalilah, who has seven locks cut from the head of Samson while he sleeps.

<sup>2</sup> In the Middle Ages Circe seems to have been supplied with a rejuvenating fountain. Dernesde (*Über die den altfranzös. Dichtern bekannten epischen Stoffe aus dem Alterthum*, Erlangen, 1887), remarks, p. 132: 'Deschamps [of the second half of the fourteenth and the first half of the fifteenth centuries] sagt S. 31, beim Tode von G. de Machault:

*La fons Circe et la fontaine Hélie  
Dont vous estiez le ruissel et le dois,  
Où poëtes mistrent leur étude  
Convient taire, etc.*

Ich vermag mir über den Sinn der Worte *la fons Circe* keine Rechenschaft zu geben.<sup>3</sup>

and dale. He believes it to be the devil's voice from hell; but when he comes down from the side of the mountain, he perceives a sea, and realises that all the noise he has heard is due simply to the breaking of the waves against the rocky cliffs. Completely worn out, he falls asleep in the field where the mermaid finds him.

Here we may have, on the one hand, a reminiscence of the coming of Odysseus to the island Scheria. Odysseus hears the breakers dash with thundering sound against the shores. He afterwards swims to the island. Worn out with fatigue, he lies down to sleep under some bushes, where the king's daughter Nausicaa finds him. On the other hand, we are reminded of the fact that Odysseus comes a second time to Circe, after he has been in the nether world. When he is about to leave her she directs him on his course, and reveals to him the dangers which he and his followers are to encounter. In Wfd. A, the mermaid directs Wolddietrich on his course when he leaves her.

As they are about to separate, the mermaid gives him an herb of which she says: 'It is useful and good for both bodies and hearts. Thou shalt take it with thee in thy wallet. When thou eatest of it thou shalt have the strength of a lion.' She shows Wolddietrich the herb growing under a tree, and teaches him how to recognise it wherever he may see it. 'There is much of it in the world; one should pay careful heed to it.' As soon as Wolddietrich has taken a little of this herb in his mouth, he recovers his strength. He also gives some to his horse, which immediately becomes high-spirited and strong. This herb appears to be connected p. 233.

with the *moly* of the *Odyssey*, which Hermes digs up for Odysseus, explaining to him its peculiar virtues. Odysseus takes the powerful root of healing with him to Circe's dwelling, and it protects him against magic.

In Wfd. the mermaid, who is changed into the most beautiful of women, was first a disgusting monster. If I am right in my supposition that Wfd. has taken features from the *Odyssey*, then the conception of the mermaid as a disgusting troll is doubtless due to the influence of the story of Scylla. This theory will find support in the O.N. poem.

## V

In her conversation with Atli, Hrímgærth says: 'I drowned the sons of Hlōthvarth (*Hlaupvarz sonom*) in the sea.' Of these persons we learn nothing more, either here or in any other O.N. poem; but they were evidently not invented by the author of the *Hrímgærðarmál*; for, in that case, he would not have left us without further information about them. We may feel certain that he did not himself create these sons of Hlōthvarth, but that he found them in some story which told how a sea-troll caused their death in the sea.

But since it is evident that the author of the *Hrímgærðarmál*, for one part of his lay, used a story not elsewhere to be found in O.N. literature, it is probable that the same story also furnished him material respecting Hrímgærth and her kin, and their relations with Helgi Hjörvarthsson and his watchman Atli.

p. 234. Light seems to be thrown on the problem by a short Latin mythical story from the early Middle Ages. Its

subject is the Greek tale of the sailing of Odysseus past the monster Scylla, in whom the fancy of the myth-makers personified the maelstrom surrounded by dangerous rocks. The story, which was indirectly the source of the O.N. poem, is a working-over of a passage in Servius's Commentary on Virgil's *Aeneid*. It is included in a collection of mythical tales from the early Middle Ages, written in barbarous Latin, and familiar under the name of the *Second Vatican Mythograph*.<sup>1</sup> Both these documents were well known in the British Isles, particularly among the Irish, and, as I have shown in the first series of my 'Studies on the Origin of the O.N. Stories of Gods and Heroes,' left many traces on the O.N. mythical world.

In the Second Mythograph we read (p. 169): *Scilla* [sic, MS.] . . . *pube tenuis in varias mutata est formas. Horrens itaque<sup>2</sup> deformitate sua, se praecipitavit in mare. Hanc postea Glaucus fecit marinam deam. Haec classem Ulixis cum sociis eius evertisse narratur. Homerus hanc immortale monstrum fuisse, Salustius saxum esse dicit, simile formae celebratae procul visentibus. Canes vero et lupi ob hoc ex ea nati esse finguntur, quia ipsa loca plena sunt monstris marinis, et saxorum asperitas illic bestiarum imitatur latratus.*

I do not go so far as to hold that the author of the Hrímgertþ-lay read the Second Vatican Mythograph in Latin; but I assume that in some way he became familiar with a story which contained a partially altered redaction of the passage just quoted.

<sup>1</sup> On this cf. my *Studien*, I, 257 ff (Norw. ed., pp. 246-248).

<sup>2</sup> The MS., in agreement with Servius (*Aeneid*, III, 420), has *itaque*, not *igitur*.

Hrímgærth, like Scylla, is a sea-troll. Both are spoken  
 p. 235. of as horrible monsters.<sup>1</sup> Hrímgærth has a mare's tail,  
 and her father bears the same name as a wolf. Scylla  
 is not of woman's nature from her waist down; she  
 gives birth to wolves and dogs. Both Hrímgærth and  
 Scylla wreck ships so that the crews are drowned.

The words applied to Scylla, *saxum simile formae celebratae procul visentibus*, may be recognised in the concluding words addressed to Hrímgærth: *hafnar mark þykkir hlægligt vera þars þú í steins líki stendr*, 'Thou standest changed into stone, like a laughable sea-mark in the harbour.' The poet had here in mind a rock of peculiar form at the entrance to the harbour, which, since it could be seen far out at sea, served as a sea-mark. The strange form of the cliff and its fanciful explanation are hinted at in the adjective 'laughable' (*hlægligt*), which reminds us of *formae celebratae*.

But the foreign tale is here fused with native stories of trolls turned into stone. We find parallels to certain expressions of the Hrímgærth-lay in modern Scandinavian popular ballads. When St. Ólaf conjures the giant into stone, he says<sup>2</sup>: 'Here shalt thou stand as a beacon<sup>3</sup> to the end of time; sail now in to the bay and harbour, all who here will land.' And in a Swedish ballad,<sup>4</sup>  
 p. 236. Heming the Young says to the witch: 'Thou

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *horrens deformitate sua*, Myth. Vatic., with *leið ertu mannkyni*, H. Hj.; *monstrum*, Myth. Vatic., with *skass*, H. Hj.

<sup>2</sup> In *Færøiske Kvæder*, II, No. 15, v. 52.

<sup>3</sup> 'Her skalt tú til áður standa | allar ævir til enda,  
 takið nú við og havnarlag | hvör sum her vil lenda!'  
*áður* either for *afður*, i.e. really, 'for a distinction,' or 'stone-heap used for a landing-place'; see Aasen's *Ordbog*, and Hertzberg's *Glossarium*. Scarcely 'accusation' as *Fær. Anthol.* takes it.

<sup>4</sup> Arwidsson, No. 13, v. 24.



art good for nothing better than to serve as a track-mark.'

The words of the Latin story cited above must have suggested to the O.N. poet the change of Hrímgérth into stone, for no other O.N. mermaid-story mentioned a similar transformation.

In the statement regarding Scylla: *Haec classem Ulixis cum sociis eius evertisse narratur*, I find the source of Hrímgérth's words: 'I drowned Hlqthvarth's sons in the sea' (*ec drecþa Hlavþvarz sonom i haf*). Ulysses was a son of Laertes. This is told in several Latin collections of myths known in Britain in the early Middle Ages, e.g. in the First Vatican Mythograph,<sup>1</sup> which is preserved in the same MS. as the Second, and in the fables of Hyginus in three different places.

It was usual in Icelandic translations of mediæval Latin works to make over the foreign names into native ones, e.g. *Hengistus*, *Heimgestr*; *Sichelinus*, *Sighjdlmr*.<sup>2</sup> When the Latin stories were orally narrated among Scandinavians in the last years of heathendom, it was, doubtless, a fixed rule to give a Scandinavian form to foreign names, either by translation or by altering them into the form of native names to which they happened to be similar in sound. Now, it was not easy to find a name with Norse sound which could reproduce *Laertes* better than *Hlqðvarðr*. This name does not occur elsewhere; but we have in O.N. epic-story the name *Hlqðvér*, of which the first part is the same. The second part, *-varðr*, is of common occurrence in O.N.

<sup>1</sup> Ed. Bode, I, 204, L, 44.

<sup>2</sup> See my *Studien*, first series, e.g. p. 180 (Norw. ed., p. 173).

names, being found *e.g.* in this Helgi-lay in the name *Hjervarðr*.<sup>1</sup>

- p. 237. We may suppose that the O.N. poet heard the name *Laertes* from the Irish in some form which was more like *Hlǫðvarðr* than was the Greek name. In a poem in the Book of Leinster, an Irish MS. of about 1150, Ulysses is called *mac Luaithlirta*, 'Laertes's son.'<sup>2</sup> The first syllable of the Irish name *Luaith-* is much like the first part of the O.N. name *Hlǫð-*, for Irish *th* is elsewhere reproduced by O.N. *ð* (O.N. *Kormlǫð* = Irish *Gormlaith*, O.N. *Kaðall* = Irish *Cathal*, etc.). However the separate sounds in the two names are related, the change which I suppose to have taken place—that, namely,

<sup>1</sup> I have pointed out many examples of a foreign *l* when initial being reproduced by Old Icel. *hl*, *e.g.* in *hlǫbarðr* = M.H.G. *lǫbart*, *Hlymræk* = *Limerik*, Old Irish *Luimnech*. Just as *ð* after *r* in *Hlǫðvarðr* corresponds to *t* in *Laertes*, so we find the same relation in Old Icel. *Arðabaðite* (*Nokkur blöðnr, Hauksbók*, p. 25) from *Artabatitae* in Isidore and Pliny; in A.S. *sæðerie*, *sūðerige*, from Lat. *satureia*; cf. Old Icel. *Kaðlín* from Irish *Katilin*. O.N. *a* in *Hlǫðvarðr* takes the place of *e* in *Laertes*. With reference to this we may note that the late A.S. form *-werd* = O.N. *-varðr*.

In *Hlǫðvarðr* a *v* appeared in the reconstruction, when *Laertes* was made over into a Norse name combined with *-varðr*. Cf. *garðsveinn* in MSS. of *Þjórekssaga* from *garzun*, Fr. *garçon*; *gangveri*, *gangvari* = *gangari*. But since in Middle Age Latin *Nicolavus* is sometimes written for *Nicolaus*, *Danavis* for *Danais*, and the like (Schuchardt, *Vocal.*, II, 521-524), so *Laertes* may possibly have been pronounced as \**Lavartes*. Finally, it is probable that the first *ð* in *Hlǫðvarðr* might have been pronounced indistinctly since *þjórekr* occurs alongside *þjóðrekr*, and since *Hrólfr* arose from \**Hrǫwulfr*, \**Hrǫðwulfr*. Moreover, Scandinavians in transforming names added *ð* where there was no corresponding consonant in the foreign name. Thus the name of the island *Skið* among the Hebrides = *Skye*, in Adamnan (c. 700) *insula Scia*, Irish *Sci* (*Cogadh Gaidhel*, ed. Todd, p. 153); *Guðjón* in *Beverssaga* for *Guion* (*Arkiv f. n. Filol.*, I, 78).

<sup>2</sup> *Merugud Uilix*, ed. Kuno Meyer, p. xii.



by which the foreign name *Laertes*, in Irish in the gen. *Luaithlirta*, is made over into the O.N. name *Hlǫð-varðr*—is at any rate natural and in entire agreement with the influences which in general made themselves felt when Scandinavians adopted foreign names in the early Middle Ages.

The O.N. poet gave the mermaid the name *Hrímgrǫr*, thereby designating her as of the kin of the disgusting *hrímbursar* (frost-giants). Analogous names of male giants are seen in *Hrímnir*, *Hrímgrímnir*. Names of women in *-grǫr* are common. The name *Hrímgrǫr* looks decidedly like a name made up by a poet, most likely in contrast to *Gerðr*, the name of the beautiful daughter of a giant, and does not seem to have been adopted from a popular story.

Hrímgrerth is said to be of such a nature that she tore to pieces greedily the dead bodies of men (*nágráðug*). In like manner Scylla tore to pieces the comrades of Ulysses. Neither this incident nor the name *Laertes* occurs in the Second Vatican Mythograph; but in Hyginus,<sup>1</sup> e.g., it is said of Scylla, *ea sex socios Ulyxis nave abreptos consumpsit*.

In the story of Scylla which is presupposed by the O.N. poem, information derived from the Second Vatican Mythograph appears, therefore, to have been united with material from other documents.

## VI

I have tried to show historical connection between the O.N. account of the meeting of Helgi Hjör. with

<sup>1</sup> Hyginus, ed. M. Schmidt, fab. cxxv, p. 108, l. 17.

Hrímgerth, and that of Wolddietrich's meeting with the mermaid. If I am right in this combination, it follows that as early as in some West-Frankish story of Wolf-Theodoric that hero had a meeting with a mermaid.

I have tried further to show that the story of Wolf-Theodoric's meeting with a mermaid presupposes an acquaintance with the story of Odysseus.

We need not assume any direct influence of the *Odyssey* on the Frankish saga of Wolf-Theodoric. I think only of a distant echo of the Greek poem, and in this view there is nothing improbable. The historical subject of the original saga of Wolddietrich is, in my opinion, the youthful life of the East-Gothic Theodoric in the Balkan Peninsula before he became king in Italy.

p. 239. The Wolddietrich-story, even in its original form, implies some knowledge of affairs in the East-Roman kingdom. There seems, then, to be nothing in the way of the supposition that it also implies some knowledge of the saga-material contained in the *Odyssey*.<sup>1</sup>

It is impossible to say definitely why the Wolf-Theodoric-story was influenced by that of Odysseus. Perhaps the reason was that Wolf-Theodoric, in the form of the story not yet affected by the Odysseus-narrative, wandered about many years in foreign lands before he returned to his faithful men, who had been ill-treated in his long absence.

<sup>1</sup> I need not, therefore, at this point go into the question of how much was known in Western Europe in the Middle Ages of the story of Odysseus or Ulysses. On this, see E. G. Joly, *Le Roman de Troie de Benoît de Sainte-More*; Darnedde, *Über die den altfranzös. Dichtern bekannten epischen Stoffe aus dem Alterthum*, Erlangen, 1887; *Merugud Uilix maicc Leirtis, the Irish Odyssey*, ed. Kuno Meyer, London, 1886; Heinzel, *Anzeiger*, IX, 256.

The transformation of the mermaid into a beautiful woman, though found in two redactions of the *Wolfdietrich*-story, does not occur in the O.N. poem. The *Hrímgerth*-lay is here the more original; for that transformation is due to a combination of *Calypso*, *Circe*, and *Scylla*—a combination which had not been made in the Frankish poem by which the *Hrímgerth*-lay was indirectly influenced. *Hrímgerth* is an out-and-out troll, like *Scylla*.

It is for this reason that the result of the meeting in the O.N. poem is entirely different from that in the German *Wolfdietrich*-stories. *Helgi* leaves *Hrímgerth*, who is transformed into stone, just as *Odysseus* escapes from *Scylla*, who is bound to a rock.

But the fact that *Hrímgerth*, like the mermaid in the *Wolfdietrich*-story, demands the hero's love, does not force us to believe that the *Calypso*-story exerted indirect influence on the O.N. lay; for this feature has sufficient explanation in the popular ideas concerning mermaids, fairies, and similar female beings.

Even in the story of *Wolf-Theodoric*, the description of the mermaid was influenced by the account of the sea-troll *Scylla*. But the influence of the *Scylla*-story was quickened and magnified by the fact that the poet, p. 240. most likely in Ireland, used material derived from a tale about *Scylla*, which was based on statements concerning her in *Servius* and other writers.

The O.N. poem shows the identity of *Hrímgerth* with *Scylla* by letting *Hrímgerth* say that she has drowned *Hlōthvarth's* (*i.e.* *Laertes's*) sons. Hence it follows that there is also some connection between *Scylla* and the sea-troll whom *Wolfdietrich* encounters.

Hrímgerth comes to Helgi after a storm in which his fleet came near perishing. Sváva comes with her maidens riding through the air. She protects Helgi's ships so that Hrímgerth cannot sink them.

The description of Sváva, Helgi's beloved, is, in its essentials, independent of the story of Odysseus; but it is perhaps possible that there is here also a slender thread uniting the stories of Helgi and Odysseus. I am reminded, on the one hand, of Athene, who always helps Odysseus, and who calms the waves so that the hero comes to the land of the Phæacians (see *Odyssey*, v, 382 ff); on the other, of the fact that Circe and Scylla in the old story are hostile to each other, and that Circe, who receives Odysseus into her bed, afterwards tells him how to avoid Scylla and Charybdis.

## VII

The part played by Atli in the Lay of Hrímgerth has no parallel either in the stories of Wolddietrich or in the *Odyssey*. In *Myth. Vatic.*, II, 167, however, immediately before the account of Scylla, the daughter of Phorcys, we read that Phorcys, while in command of a great host, was killed by King Atlas in a sea-fight, and that after his death his men reported that he had become a sea-god.<sup>1</sup>

p. 241. In my opinion, the Norseman who composed the *Hrímgerðarmál* knew from another O.N. poem that *Atli* was the man most esteemed by Helgi's father, and identified this Atli with the *Atlas* of the story just given. It is due, then, to the resemblance of the names *Atli*

<sup>1</sup> *Qui cum ab Atlante rege navali certamine cum magna exercitus parte obrutus fuisset, finxerunt socii, eum in deum marinum esse conversum.*



and *Atlas* that Atli appears as a leading personage in the Lay of Hrímgrerth. Since the meeting with the mermaid was transferred from Wolf-Theodoric to Helgi Hjörvarthsson, and since the O.N. story knew Helgi as king, and Atli as his father's faithful man, the poet made King Helgi, and not Atli, kill Hrímgrerth's father, though Scylla's father, according to the Latin tale, was killed by King Atlas. Still, the Hrímgrerth-lay puts Atli in the foreground as Hrímgrerth's enemy, and dwells most on him. I conjecture that the Latin text was misunderstood, so that Atlas was supposed to have a great fleet in the battle in which Scylla's father was killed, the words *cum magna exercitus parte* being applied to *Atlante rege* alone; and that this gave rise to the statement in the O.N. story that Helgi and Atli lay in a fjord, with a fleet, after Hrímgrerth's father was killed.

There is no reason to believe that there existed in ancient times in the O.N. language an epic poem or separate detailed story which told more fully how Helgi killed the giant Hati. It is even possible that the account of Hati's death in the prose bit before the *Hrímgrerðarmál* was drawn exclusively from the poem which follows; for the only feature in the prose account which is not in the poem, the statement that Hati was sitting on a cliff when he was killed, may very well have been a pure fabrication of the author's.

## VIII

It seems to me certain that the Hrímgrerth-lay pre- p. 242. supposes the First Lay of Helgi Hundingsbani; for several features in the former are certainly borrowed from the

latter. In the Helgi-lay a storm is described in which the fleet is near foundering, but from which it finally escapes. I have shown that this description was to some extent influenced by an Irish tale. Now in the Hrímgærth-lay also a storm is spoken of, in which Helgi's fleet would have been wrecked had it not been saved by a valkyrie. It is certain, then, that this presupposes the corresponding incident in the First Helgi-lay. Further, the place-name *Varinsvík* in the Hrímgærth-lay must have been formed in imitation of *Varinsfjord* in the account of the fight with Höthbrodd, where there are several names of places mentioned which are situated in the same waters as Varinsfjord.

I have shown that the conversation between Atli and Hrímgærth betrays the influence of the conversation between Sinfjötli and Guthmund as we find it in the First Helgi-lay (which, as we have seen, is a lengthened working-over of the word-combat in the Second Lay). It should now be observed that, *vice versa*, the dialogue between Sinfjötli and Guthmund in the First Helgi-lay seems, strangely enough, to have been influenced by ideas in the Hrímgærth-lay.

This Hrímgærth is, and is called, a troll-wife (*skass*). She is described as a monster with a tail, ready to follow the stallion. Her father bears the wolf-name Hati, and of her prototype Scylla we read: 'It is told in fable that she gave birth to wolves and dogs.' Now Guthmund is likewise called by Sinfjötli a troll-wife (*skass*). He is said, moreover, to have been a mare, and to have given birth to wolves.

This peculiar circular relationship between the Hrímgærth-lay and the First Helgi-lay seems to me capable

of explanation in only one way: the First Helgi-lay and the Hrímgæth-lay must have been composed by one and the same author. He must have planned the two poems about the same time; but he seems to have finished the First Helgi-lay first, or, at any rate, the greater part of it.

In what precedes I have endeavoured to prove that this First Lay was composed ca. 1020-1035 by a poet from the west of Norway, who understood Irish and English. He was familiar with Irish poetry, and lived a while at the Scandinavian royal court in Dublin, and probably a while also in England. The same may, therefore, be said of the Lay of Hrímgæth.

The author of that poem too must, therefore, have been born in the west of Norway. In favour of this view we have another argument: In H. Hj., 25, Atli says to Hrímgæth: 'Lothin he is called, who shall become thy husband'; the monster dwells *í þolleyio* (i.e. in *Toll Isle*). Professor Rygh has called my attention to the fact that there are in Sþndhordland two small islands which bear the name *Tollþen*<sup>1</sup> (Toll Isle). The form *reini* (H. Hj., 20, 21), 'stallion,' not *vreini*, also supports the opinion that the poet was born in the west of Norway.

Since the author of the Hrímgæth-lay appears to have understood Irish, to have been to some extent familiar with Irish poetry, and to have lived with the Scandinavian king in Dublin, an acquaintance on his part with the story of Scylla, particularly as it was known from the Second Vatican Mythograph, is entirely

<sup>1</sup> Now pronounced *Tādþyo*, the one between Tysnæsþen and Skorpen in Tysnæs Præstegjæld, the other in Ølen Sogn, Tysnæs Præstegjæld.



natural and not in the least remarkable. For, in the first place, the Vatican Mythographs were composed in north-western Europe, most likely by Irishmen; and, secondly, the MS. in which they are preserved seems to have been written by an Irishman.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, it can also be proved from other documents that the story of p. 244. Scylla and Charybdis was known in Ireland in the early Middle Ages.

## IX

In the hymn of St. Columba, 'Altus Prosator' (composed a little before 600), *carubdibus* and *scillis* are used of the whirlpools under which the giants groan in hell.<sup>2</sup> And in a marginal note at this place in an old Irish MS.<sup>3</sup> the story of Scylla and Charybdis is told in Latin following the source used by *Myth. Vatic.*, II, 169 and 170, viz. Servius's commentary on Virgil's *Aeneid*, III, 420, but with many new corruptions.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In this way certain peculiar forms, like *scotię* for *Scythiæ*, *vesta* for *Vesta*, *Sarpalice* for *Harpalyce*, are explained. See my *Studien über die Entstehung der nord. Götter- und Heldensagen*, I, 257 ff (Norw. ed., I, 246-248).

<sup>2</sup> V. 60 f; see *Liber Hymnorum*, ed. Todd, II, 214.

<sup>3</sup> *Liber Hymnorum* (Trin. Coll., Dublin, E. 4, 2), which, according to Stokes, is from the end of the eleventh or the beginning of the twelfth century.

<sup>4</sup> It runs thus: *Scilla . . . conuersa est . . . in beluam marinam et noluit ad homines uenire propter formam suam, proiecit se in mare. Videns mater Carubdis filiam suam Scillam in mare nantem, exiit in mare ut teneret eam, sed non potuit, et frequenter [ven]tis affligebant, ut ferunt fabule. Videns Neptunus quod in mare . . . mittit tridentem in mare et statuit eas in scopulos et fixit Scillam in Sicilia et Carubdim in Italia cominus et nix nautae navigare possunt inter eas sine periculo.*

For [ven]tis affligebant I conjecture nautas affligebant; after quod in mare we should doubtless add exierant. In an Irish MS. of the

The Irish redaction of the Scylla-story omits some of the features which influenced the Hrímgrerth-lay; but, on the other hand, in some respects it is nearer than the redaction in the *Myth. Vatic.* to the O.N. poem, and in part may be regarded as a stage in the transition to the latter.

*Scilla* is here called without hesitation a sea-monster (*belua marina*), and is said to have swum out into the sea (*in mare nantem*), which agrees with the account in the O.N. Lay. Further, in opposition to the old classical story, *Carubdis* is made into *Scilla's* mother; p. 245. and of the mother we read that she swam out into the sea, but was unable to reach her daughter there; and of them both, as it seems, that they molested the seamen (*frequenter nautas* [?] *affligebant*). Similarly, in the O.N. lay we read that both mother and daughter lay in the sea, but apart from each other, and that both molested seamen.

Finally, the Irish redaction, in opposition to the old classical story, tells us that Neptune thrust his trident into the sea, and fastened *Scilla* and *Carubdis* to two rocks.<sup>1</sup> With this we may compare the statement in the O.N. lay that one of the two sea-trolls was pierced by a pole (*ef þér kæmit í þverst þvari*). *Atli* says that it was Hrímgrerth; but she says that it was her mother. The expression for 'pole' which is here used, viz. *þvari*, could be used of a trident or a similar weapon.

tenth century there is also a note on *Scilla*; see Stokes in *Ztsch. f. vgl. Sprachf.*, XXXIII, 64.

<sup>1</sup> In the *Scholia Bernensia* to Virgil's *Eclogues*, VII, 74 (ed. Hagen, p. 804), it is also told how Neptune pierced *Scylla* with his trident and changed her to a rock. The account in the *Scholia* resembles in other respects also that in the *Liber Hymnorum*.

We see, therefore, that the Norse poet was not familiar with the story of Scylla in exactly the same form in which we read it in the Second Vatican Mythograph, but in a form current in Ireland which, though based partly on the latter, was more corrupt.

## X

The Hrímgæth-lay is connected with the other parts of the Lay of Helgi Hjörvarthsson, not only through the characters Helgi and Atli, but also by the fact that the splendid valkyrie, who saves the king's ships, is introduced in contrast to the disgusting Hrímgæth, who wishes to destroy them.<sup>1</sup>

p. 246. The ride of the valkyries through the air is described in the Hrímgæth-lay essentially as in the First Helgi-lay.

I should now like to point out a peculiarity in this Hrímgæth-poem. In the prose passage in H. H., II, between 18 and 19, we read: 'They saw *nine* valkyries ride in the air.' The number nine is, of course, significant and very common in stories and superstitions;<sup>2</sup> but the statement in H. Hj., 28, is more peculiar: '*Three times nine maidens* (really: *Three nines of maidens*), yet a white helmet-decked maiden rode alone ahead,'

*þrennar niundir meyja,  
þó reið ein fyrir  
hvít und hjálmi mæ.*

<sup>1</sup> In the Scylla-story Circe, daughter of the Sun, is named as her rival; but, as I have said before, the influence of the Circe-story on the Helgi-poems is hardly traceable.

<sup>2</sup> See B. Grøndal in *Annaler f. nord. Oldk.*, 1862, pp. 370 ff.



The same enumeration is so common in Irish,<sup>1</sup> particularly in old Irish heroic stories, that it may be considered as a fixed formula.<sup>2</sup> And while the O.N. *niund*, 'nine in number,' occurs only in the one verse of the Helgi-lay, the Irish *nónbor*, *noinbor*, which has the same meaning, is a common word.

The Irish expression in the following story should be noted particularly. In the tale of Bran, which is known to have existed ca. 1100, Bran sets out with three times nine men to find a fairy land. They come to the 'Land of Women' and see the princess of these women near the harbour. They are led ashore by magic, and come into a large house where there are three times nine beds, one for each couple.<sup>3</sup> Thus, as in the Helgi-lay, men, who come sailing, see three times nine supernatural women near the harbour. p. 247.

In the Irish tale of Conchobar's Birth, which is preserved in a MS. of the fifteenth century, and seems to be of comparatively late origin, we are told of the hero's mother Ness, before she was married: 'There-

<sup>1</sup> Even also among the Romans: *Decrevēre pontifices, ut virgines ter novēnae per urbem euntes carmen canerent*, Livy, 27, 37 (to avert a bad omen). Among the Greeks: Patroklos killed *τρίς ἐννέα φῶτας*, *Iliad*, XVI, 785 (cited by Grøndal, p. 375).

<sup>2</sup> I adduce some examples: In the story of the mythical fight between Tuatha Dé Danann and the Fomorians, a man says that his object in the battle is to 'chase away the king and chase away three nines of his friends' (*Rev. Celt.*, XII, 91). We read of the Fomorians, when Balor's glance fell upon them, that 'three nines of them died' (XII, 101). In another story it is said: 'Coirpre dealt out (the cooked fish) among his three times nine persons' (Cormac's Glossary, under *Orc tréith*). Other examples in the story of the *Wooing of Emer*, translated by Kuno Meyer, p. 8; *Fled Bricrend*, ed. Windisch, §§ 84, 89. The number of these examples could easily be increased.

<sup>3</sup> *Ztsch. f. d. Alt.*, XXXIII, 259 f.

upon she set out on an expedition with three nines of men to revenge her guardians.'<sup>1</sup> When Ness at one time in this expedition was bathing in a spring in the wild forest and had laid her clothes and armour from her, the Druid Cathbad surprised her and forced her to become his wife. He had previously, when he was on an expedition with three times nine men, killed Ness's twelve guardians.

Observe that here it is a young woman who sets out armed as a shield-maiden with three nines of men. She is bound to a man in essentially the same way as the valkyries in the Wayland-lay. It is, therefore, in the highest degree probable that the statement in the Hrímgærth-lay, that the valkyries were 'three nines of maidens,' is due to Irish influence.

In the elaboration of the dialogue between Atli and Hrímgærth, the O.N. poet may also have been partly influenced in details by an Irish story of a conversation between a hero and a supernatural woman.

Atli exchanges taunting words with a supernatural woman, who seeks his and Helgi's love; and they p. 248. threaten each other. Atli says (21): 'Thou shalt be wholly crushed'; and to this Hrímgærth answers: 'Thou shalt get thy ribs squeezed flat if thou comest into my clutches.'

With this we may compare an Irish tale in the MS. *Lebor na h Uidre* of ca. 1100, which belongs to the old Ulster epic cycle.<sup>2</sup> The war-fury Morrigan comes in the form of a young woman, decked out in clothes of

<sup>1</sup> *Rev. Celt.*, VI, 174, 179; cf. Zimmer, *Ztsch. f. d. Alt.*, XXXII, 265.

<sup>2</sup> *Rev. Celt.*, I, 45 f.

all colours, to meet the hero Cuchulinn, and says that she loves him. When he rejects her, she says that she will change herself into an eel under his feet, so that he shall fall. He answers that he will seize her between his fingers, so that her ribs shall break. After several retorts, in which they threaten each other, they separate.

In other records of this conversation,<sup>1</sup> the fury Morrigan says that she will change herself into a she-wolf. What is predicted in the conversation takes place later. Hrímgérth's father bears the wolf's name Hati, and her prototype Scylla gives birth to wolves.<sup>2</sup>

It was in the Hati-fjord (*i Hatafirðir*) that Hrímgérth came to Helgi's ships, and was changed into a stone sea-mark.<sup>3</sup> No real fjord with this name has been pointed out,<sup>4</sup> and the name was doubtless made up by the O.N. poet himself. Since Hrímgérth was a troll, the

<sup>1</sup> Stokes and Windisch, *Irische Texte*, II, 2, pp. 239-254.

<sup>2</sup> In H. H., I, Sinfjötli accuses Guthmund of having been a troll-wife. He calls her (st. 42) *simul*, which probably means 'a cow.' The word resembles the modern Norw. *simla*, 'female reindeer, rein-cow,' in Østerdalen *sþmþl* and *sumul*, and O.N. *simull*, 'ox.' That the word was used by Scandinavians in Britain is proved by the Gaelic *siomlach*, 'a cow that gives milk without the calf' (Macleod-Dewar), which is borrowed from Old Norse. In the conversation with Cuchulinn, Morrigan says that she will change herself into a (hornless) cow (*Irische Texte*, II, 2, 247-253). That *simul* (H. H., I, 42) was, however, understood in ancient times as 'she-wolf,' we may conclude from *sim* . . . (i.e. *simul*) in Sn. Ed., II, 258, *svimul* in Sn. Ed., I, 592; II, 484; II, 627, among words for 'wolf,' which is doubtless taken from H. H., I, 42.

<sup>3</sup> See H. Hj., 12, and preceding prose passages; also H. Hj., 30.

<sup>4</sup> Keyser (*Efterladte Skrifter*, I, 161) and Vigfusson (*Grimm Centenary*, p. 30) have made conjectures as to where Hati-fjord is to be sought for; but they seem to me to lack firm foundation.



poet must of necessity make her father a giant or troll, and therefore he calls him Hati. This name means 'the hostile pursuer,' and is eminently suitable for a giant or troll. Thus we read of the troll Grendel in *Béowulf*, 2319, that he *Géata léode hatode*—'pursued the people of the Geats.' In *Grímnismál*, 39, *Hati* is the name of one of the sun-wolves. Being the name of a wolf, *Hati* could be used as a name for Hrímgérth's father, because it was said of Hrímgérth's prototype, Scylla, that she gave birth to wolves.<sup>1</sup> Now the O.N. poet knew from the Latin story that *Scylla* was turned into stone near a strait or sound.<sup>2</sup> A strait between two lands was called by the Norsemen not merely *sund* (sound), but also *fjörðr* (fjord)—e.g. *Pétlandsfjörðr*, the Pentland Firth, between Scotland and the Orkneys.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, the poet represented Hrímgérth as turned into stone *near a fjord*. He called this fjord, after his father, *Hatafjörðr*; for he knew from the Latin tale that Scylla's father also went about in the sea.

By describing the sea-trolls with features familiar to Scandinavian superstition, and by transforming all that he took from foreign sources in accordance with genuine Scandinavian tradition and sentiment, the poet succeeded in making of Helgi's meeting with Hrímgérth and her kin a truly native picture—graphic and effective, even

<sup>1</sup> *Skallí* also is the name both of a giant and of a sun-wolf.

<sup>2</sup> *Myth. Vatic.*, II, 169 begins, according to the ms.: *Scilla phorci et cretidos nymphae filia fuit*. Directly before these words, we read in Servius on Virgil's *Aeneid*, III, 420: *Scylla enim in Italia est, Charybdis in Sicilia*. The opposite is said in the place in the *Liber Hymnorum* cited above, p. 244. Cf. *Myth. Vatic.*, II, 170.

<sup>3</sup> Other examples in Vigfusson, *Grimm Centenary*, p. 30.



if coarse—of the life of Viking chieftains on the billowy deep, struggling against perils from sea and storm.

Down below we perceive the troll-wife before the king's fleet, which she would fain destroy ; but our gaze is fixed on the noble woman whose superior power is exercised in Helgi's defence. Over the surging sea she rides with golden gleam, a radiant helmet-decked maiden, before the valkyries who attend her. The manes of their steeds are shaken as they fly, causing hail to descend on the high trees and fertilising dew in the deep dales. Towards the strand the fearless woman rides erect, there, with powerful hand, to make secure the ships of the chieftain she loves.

## XX

## HJØRVARTH AND SIGRLINN.

WOLF-THEODORIC, from whom, as we have seen, a legendary feature was transferred to Helgi Hjørvarthson, was brought into connection with the Merovingians: his father is called Huge Dietrich, the name given to Chlodovech's son Theuderik in the Wfd.-saga.

Certain other West-Frankish, particularly Merovingian, stories of Chlodovech and his immediate successors have, in my opinion, left traces on the story of Hjørvarth and his son Helgi.

The Lay of Helgi Hjør. in the Edda, has a prose introduction concerning Helgi's father, in which we read : ' King Hjørvarth had four wives. The first was called Alfild ; their son was called Hethin. The second was p. 251.

called Særeith; their son was called Humlung. The third was called Sinrjóth; their son was called Hymling.<sup>1</sup> With reference to this passage, Finnur Jónsson writes<sup>1</sup>: 'Here [in two cases] we have one and the same person made into two (*Særeidr* = *Sinrjóð*, *Humlungr* = *Hymlingr*).' I have long been of the same opinion; but this view seems to me tenable only on the assumption that the names were not originally Norse. I would suggest that they are based on A.S. forms, which in their turn may come from Frankish names. *Hymlingr* corresponds, doubtless, to an A.S. form in *-ling*, while *Humlungr* is probably a Norse reconstruction. The relation between the two names is the same as that between A.S. *cyning* and O.N. *konungr*, A.S. *Scylding* (*Scyldung*) and O.N. *Skjöldungr*, etc.

The wife was probably called in A.S. \**Sinred*, which may have been the A.S. reproduction of the Frankish *Sendrada*, \**Sindrada*, though by rule the corresponding A.S. form of this name should be \**Siðred*. A.S. *e* in \**Sinred*, which was perhaps half long in pronunciation, was reproduced in *Særeidr* by O.N. *ei*; cf. O.N. *Heiðrekr strjóna* in *Knytlingasaga* from A.S. *Ēadríc* (*Ēdríc*) *stréon*. By another Norseman the *e* in \**Sinred* was reproduced by *jó* in *Sinrjóð*; cf. O.N. *Langaspjót* from *Longospeda*, O.N. *fljóð* from A.S. *-fled* in names of women. In the O.N. reconstruction there was also a change of meaning. *Sinrjóð* betrays the influence of *rjóðr*, 'ruddy-cheeked'; *Særeidr* that of names of women in *-eiðr*, e.g. *Jóreiðr*. *Jóreiðr* may also have influenced the first part of *Særeidr*. It may have been mistaken for a compound of which the nominative *jór*,

<sup>1</sup> *Litt. Hist.*, I, 244.

'horse,' was one part; and similarly *Særeiðr* may have been thought to contain the nominative *sær*.<sup>1</sup> Possibly, therefore, *Særeiðr* (A.S. \**Sinred*, Frankish \**Sindrada*) has some connection with *Sidrât*, the name in Wfd. D of Ortnit's widow, who marries Wolddietrich.<sup>2</sup>

Here in the Hjørvarth-lay, as is the case elsewhere, p. 252, the prose passages contain saga-material not preserved in verse.

The polygamy of Hjørvarth recalls the customs of the Merovingian kings. Helgi Hjørvarthsson's mother is called *Sigrlinn*. This is identical with *Sigelint*, the name of *Sigemunt's* mother in several M.H.G. poems. In the O.N. lay, on the other hand, the wife of Sigmund, and mother of Sigurth Fáfnisbani, is called *Hjörðis Eylima dóttir* (Hjörðis, the daughter of Eylimi).

Several German scholars<sup>3</sup> have observed that *Sigrlinn* was not from the outset the name of the wife of the O.N. saga-king Hjørvarth. In stories current among the Franks, and not originally Norse, *Sigrlinn* (*Sigelint*) was, on the contrary, the name of Sigmund's wife. *Vice versa*, *Hjörðis* seems at the outset to have been an O.N., and not a German, saga-figure. Some shift is thought to have taken place. The names

*Hjørvarðr* : *Sigrlinn*,

*Sigmundr* : *Hjörðis*,

<sup>1</sup> The place-name *Saheimr* has in Northern Norwegian the form *Sleimr*. Did *Særeiðr* replace \**Sleieiðr*?

<sup>2</sup> Wolddietrich had with *Sidrât* the son Hugdietrich, i.e. *Hugo Theodoricus*, the Frankish Theodoric. In *Parise la duchesse*, *Hugues* (i.e. *Hugo*, with diminutive suffix *-et*) corresponds to Wolddietrich. May we therefore believe that *Humlungr* and *Hymlingr* are Norse reconstructions of a Frankish name *Hugiling* or *Huginling*, i.e. the little Frank?

<sup>3</sup> Uhland, *Schriften*, VIII, 130 f; Sijmons in Paul-Braune, *Beit.*, IV, 197 f; Müllenhoff, *Ztsch. f. d. Alt.*, N.F., XI, 139 f, 170 ff.



are supposed to have been originally grouped as follows :—

*Hjorvarðr and Hjördis,  
Sigmundr and Sigrlinn.*

The first couple belonged to Scandinavian saga ; the second to West Germanic (Frankish).

In the Edda we read how Sigrlinn became Hjorvarth's wife. Since, as we have seen, in the original story about Sigrlinn she was not married to the Scandinavian king Hjorvarth, but to the West-Germanic Sigmund, with  
p. 253. whom the Scandinavians became familiar from an English story, the question arises : How much of the story of how Sigrlinn became Hjorvarth's wife is drawn from a Scandinavian, how much from a West-Germanic, story ? To what extent is it based on a story of Hjorvarth, on one of Sigmund, or on one which told of some other saga-king ?

In my opinion, the story of how Hjorvarth got Sigrlinn to wife is a Norse redaction and fusion of several West-Germanic tales of how various saga-kings obtained their wives, one of which told of the winning of Sigelint (Sigrlinn) by Sigmund.

The account in the Edda is as follows :—King Hjorvarth, although he has already three wives, vows to marry the most beautiful woman in the world. One day Atli, son of the king's earl Ithmund, hears the voice of a bird from a tree above his head. The bird reveals to him that Sigrlinn, daughter of Sváfnir, is the fairest of maidens ; and offers to bring it about that Sigrlinn of her own will shall become Hjorvarth's wife,

demanding, however, in return for its services, temples, altars, and sacrifices of gold-horned kine. When Hjørvarth hears of this, he despatches Atli to woo Sigrlinn for him. Atli comes to King Sváfnir and stays with him a whole winter. But, following the advice of his earl Fránmar, Sváfnir rejects the offer of marriage, and Atli at once returns home. King Hjørvarth then sets out himself for Sváfnir's land (Sváfaland), bidding Atli accompany him. When they reach the mountains on the border, they see fires in Sváfaland, and clouds of dust in the air caused by many riders. They continue their journey down the mountain, and finally halt for the night by a river. During the night, Atli, who has been keeping watch, discovers on the opposite side of the river a house, on the roof of which a large bird is sitting, as if to guard the place. The bird, however, is asleep, and Atli kills it with his spear. He finds in the house the king's daughter Sigrlinn, and Fránmar's daughter Álof, and hastens away with them. It appears that a p. 254. certain King Hróthmar, a rejected suitor of Sigrlinn, has slain King Sváfnir, and burned and plundered the land. The bird, which Atli has killed, is Fránmar, who had put on the form of an eagle, hoping to protect the women by magic. King Hjørvarth marries Sigrlinn, and gives Álof to Atli.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Edzardi and F. Jónsson have expressed the opinion that the conversation between Atli and the bird takes place *after* Atli's first visit to King Sváfnir's land. This view, however, is open to objection. Hjørvarth must have heard that Sigrlinn was the fairest of all women before he despatched Atli to woo her. Now in St. 1 the bird says expressly that Sigrlinn is the fairest of women, 'though the wives of Hjørvarth seem fair to men.' These words of the bird seem, therefore, to have been the cause of Hjørvarth's sending Atli to woo on his behalf.

This story of the wooing of Sigrlinn belongs to a group of tales which has many representatives in Germanic saga: a king hears of the beautiful daughter of a foreign prince, sends men out to woo her, and, despite all hindrances, succeeds in securing her as his bride.<sup>1</sup> One subdivision of this group embraces the stories in which the king's messenger brings home at the same time, as his own wife, a woman nearly related to the bride of his master.

I shall now mention a few of these parallel stories, which seem to throw light on the origin of the episode in the Eddic lay.

In the *Þiðrekssaga* (chaps. 152-154) we read that King Sigmund of Karlungaland<sup>2</sup> (*i.e.* the land of the Carolingians, France), sends men to King Nithung and his son Ortvangis in Spain<sup>3</sup> to woo for him Nithung's daughter Sisibe, who is reputed to be the fairest and  
 p. 255, most courteous of women. Nithung receives the messengers well, but answers that he will not send his daughter to an unknown land. Being assured, however, that King Sigmund is a distinguished man, he promises not to refuse him his daughter if the king comes in person. When Sigmund gets this message, he sets out with a magnificent suite. He is received with great honour by Nithung, weds Sisibe, and returns home with her.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Many such tales are cited by P. Rajna, *Le Origini dell' epopea francese*, pp. 80 ff, where, however, the story in the Edda is not mentioned.

<sup>2</sup> The MSS. have *tarlungaland* (B, *iarlunga*-), which is a mistake for *carlungaland*.

<sup>3</sup> *Hispana*, Membr. ; *Spania*, A ; *Hispaniam*, B.

<sup>4</sup> This story of Sigmund may be compared with an historical event: the Frankish king Sigebert actually despatched a messenger to the Spanish king to woo his daughter Brunihild, who thereupon was sent to France.



This story, as preserved in the *þiðrekssaga*, cannot be the basis of the Eddic account of Hjørvarth and Sigrlinn, nor can it have influenced this account in any considerable degree. Still, it looks as if the author of the Eddic lay heard some version of the Sigmund-story different from that in the *þiðrekssaga*, and from it got *Sigrlinn* as the name of Hjørvarth's bride. *Sisibe*, which appears in the *þiðrekssaga*, is less original as the name of Sigmund's queen and Sigfrid's mother than *Sigelint*.

I believe, therefore, that the O.N. story of Hjørvarth and Sigrlinn was influenced partly (if not to any great extent) by a foreign, West-Germanic tale which told how Sigemund despatched messengers to woo for him the king's daughter Sigelint, of whose beauty he had heard, and how he failed to win her until he undertook the suit in person. Yet, with respect to many details, it cannot be decided how much resemblance there was between that lost West-Germanic tale of Sigmund, which I suppose the O.N. poet to have heard, and the story as we have it in the *þiðrekssaga*.

In the story of Hjørvarth and Sigrlinn there are many poetic features which have no parallels in the story of p. 256. Sigmund in the *þiðrekssaga*. Several of these are connected with a story, preserved in the same saga (chaps. 42-56), of *Attila's* wooing.<sup>1</sup> This is found in two different redactions in the Norwegian parchment MS. of the saga, and also in both Icelandic paper MSS. The forms of several names seem to show that the

<sup>1</sup> Müllenhoff has already remarked (*Ztsch. f. d. Alt.*, N.F., XI, 142), that the story of Attila in the *þiðrekssaga* belongs to the same type as that of Hjørvarth.

stories of Sigmund and Attila both came into the *Þiðrekssaga* through a Latin intermediary.

Attila sends his kinsman Ósith and Duke Rótholf (one redaction names Ósith only) with many men to Vilcinaland to woo for him Erka, the daughter of King Ósangtrix. The king receives the messengers well, but replies angrily to the request for his daughter's hand; for Attila, he says, has shown himself to be his enemy. Then the messengers ride home. On the way, in conversation with one another, they express the opinion that never before have they seen such beautiful women as Erka and her sister Berta (in the Icelandic redaction, Herat). When they reach home, they tell Atli of the ill success of their journey. The redaction which does not name Rótholf, states that Ósith on his return declares that there is no hope of Attila's getting the daughter of King Ósangtrix, but that he (Ósith) has never before seen so beautiful a maiden as Erka; and that next in beauty to her was her sister Berta.

Attila now sends the Margrave Róthingeir of Bakalar on the same errand; but he also is refused. The redaction which in the preceding part does not mention Rótholf, has at this point Rótholf, not Róthingeir of Bakalar.

Finally, Attila himself sets out with an army. He burns and harries in Vilcinaland, but retreats when Ósangtrix has assembled a great army against him. Attila halts for the night in a forest. The good knight Rótholf (or, as the redaction which does not name Róthingeir calls him, Margrave Rótholf) keeps watch.  
 p. 257. He rides with armed men through the forest to Ósangtrix's camp, and there slays many men. Rótholf comes

back safely with his warriors to Attila, who then returns home.

When Attila has been at home a while, Rótholf comes to him and begs him for the men and equipment necessary for an expedition. The king's nephew Ósith will follow him. He is to be away three years, but does not say where he intends going. When he gets what he wishes, he sets out for Vilcinaland, and again makes good provision for his men in a large forest. He himself comes in disguise to Ósangtrix. He calls himself Sigifred (which name in Norwegian, as the saga-writer notes, is called Sigurth), and says that he has travelled thither because of King Attila, who is his enemy. He wins Ósangtrix's confidence, and remains with him a year, but without speaking with the king's daughter Erka.

Then Northung, King of Sváfaland, comes to woo Erka. The Earl Hertnit and his brother Hirthir support the suit. Ósangtrix is willing to arrange the match, and sends the supposed Sigurth to plead Northung's cause to Erka, who dwells in a castle of maidens, to which, as a usual thing, men were refused admittance.

When Sigurth is able to converse with Erka in the garden outside of the castle, he reveals to her that he is Attila's messenger, and urges his master's suit. As a result of their conversation, Erka promises to become Attila's wife, while her sister Berta (in the Icelandic MSS., Herat) agrees to marry Rótholf.

Both Ósangtrix and Northung are befooled by Rótholf. Northung, assured that Erka will marry him at the end of a year, turns homeward. Ósangtrix



becomes so fond of the supposed Sigurth that he wishes to make him his prime minister. But Sigurth says that his brother Alibrand is better fitted for the office, and with the king's consent rides away to fetch him. p. 258. Rótholf comes to his men, and induces Ósith to follow him to Ósangtrix. There Ósith passes as Rótholf's brother Alibrand.

A week after, Sigurth and Alibrand carry off Erka and Berta (or Herat) on horseback in the night, while the king sleeps. Ósangtrix pursues them; but the fugitives succeed in reaching Attila. The king marries Erka, and gives Berta (Herat) in marriage to Rótholf.

There is undoubtedly historical connection, even though it be indirect, between the O.N. story of how Hjørvarth won Sigrlinn, and the story in the *Þiðrekssaga* of how Attila won Erka. I shall now point out the different features in which the latter story (which I call A) stands nearer to the former (H) than does that of Sigmund and Sisibe. (1) In both H and A the messenger who is to plead the king's cause, is mentioned by name. In H he is an earl's son; in A a duke or a margrave. (2) In both H and A the messenger receives a definite refusal from the king whose daughter he woos. (3) In A the messenger, when speaking to his master, says that the daughter of the foreign king is the fairest of women. This is not expressly stated in H, but seems to be implied in H. Hj., 1. (4) In H the messenger lives a winter with the foreign king. In A he lives two winters at the foreign court, though, to be sure, under entirely different relations than in H, and not when he is there the first

time. (5) Both in A and H there is also another king who woos the foreign king's daughter. (6) In H the proposal of the chief hero of the story is rejected in accordance with the counsel of the foreign king's earl. In A it is the foreign king's earl who, after Attila's suit is rejected, supports that of another king. (7) In both A and H, when the rejected king has come to the land of the king who refuses him his daughter, there is burning and plundering in that land; but while in A it is the chief hero of the story who burns and plunders, p. 259. in H it is the rival suitor. (8) Neither in A nor in H does the chief hero meet his rival personally; for the rival leaves before the hero wins his wife. (9) After the chief hero of the story has come into the land of the king whose daughter he has wooed, it is said, in both A and H, that he halts for the night—in H by a river, in A by a forest. (10) In both A and H the man previously sent out as a messenger (in H an earl's son, in A a duke or margrave), keeps watch in the night. In both he leaves his master. In H he crosses the river; in A he traverses a forest. (11) In both he comes in the night to a place where he finds countrymen of the foreign king's daughter. In A he kills many of the followers of the foreign king; in H he slays the king's earl who has advised the rejection of his suit. (12) Finally, the messenger carries off with him both the foreign king's daughter and another woman (in A her sister, in H a daughter of her father's earl). The king's daughter, in both A and H, becomes his master's wife of her own free will, while the messenger marries the other woman. (13) *Sváfaland*, 'the land of the Swabians,' is named in both A and H.

In A it is the land in which the chief hero's rival lives. In H it is that of the foreign king, which the rival harries. (14) The name *Atli* occurs both in A and H (in the former in the foreign form *Attila* or *Atila*). But in the *Þiðrekssaga* King Attila is the chief hero of the story, as winner of the foreign king's daughter, while in the O.N. *Atli* is the messenger sent out to do the wooing. This difference seems to admit of explanation.

p. 260. The O.N. poet appears to have united a foreign tale of Attila's wooing with other foreign tales of a king's journey in search of a bride, and to have transferred the story formed by this fusion to the O.N. saga-king *Hjorvarth*. He had no use, therefore, for Attila or Atli as the name of the rival suitor; but, observing that the name of the messenger in the story he was following was one which would sound strange to the ear of Scandinavians, he replaced it by *Atli*, which was familiar to them all. Similarly *Herkja*, which was originally in a foreign tale the name of Atli's (Attila's) queen, was degraded, in the third *Guthrún-lay*, to the name of Atli's concubine, the slanderer of his queen *Guthrún*.

The Frankish story<sup>1</sup> of the wooing of the Merovingian King *Chlodovech* is closely related to that of *Hjorvarth* and *Sigrinn*. It deserves especial attention here, not only because it is older than the other stories under discussion, but also because it keeps closer to historical events.

<sup>1</sup> The relation of this story to epic poetry is treated by P. Rajna in *Le Origini dell' epopea francese*, chap. 3; cf. also Godefroid Kurth, *Histoire politique des Mérovingiens*, Paris, 1893, pp. 225-251.



In Gregory of Tours (second half of the sixth century), we read as follows (II, 28): Gundobad, king of the Burgundians, killed his brother Chilperik, and exiled (*exilio condemnavit*) Chilperik's two daughters, of whom the elder became a nun, and received the name Chrona, and the younger was called Chrodechildis. Chlodovech sent messengers repeatedly to the King of the Burgundians. These met Chrodechildis, found her fair and wise, and heard that she was a king's daughter. They spoke of her to their king. Thereupon Chlodovech sent a message to Gundobad, demanding Chrodechildis to wife. Her uncle dared not refuse, and gave her over to the envoys, who bore her in all haste to Chlodovech. p. 261. He rejoiced when he saw her, and the two were married. Chlodovech had previously begotten by a concubine the son Theuderik.

Gregory's short account of Chlodovech's marriage, which took place about the year 492, seems to indicate that he knew a more elaborate popular narrative of the event.

We have a much more detailed account, which evidently has been influenced by a popular epic treatment of the subject, in the chronicle attributed to Fredegar, which seems to have been composed in Aventicum in West Switzerland about the middle of the seventh century.<sup>1</sup> Here the elder sister is called *Saedeleuba*. The messengers whom Chlodovech first sends to the King of the Burgundians are not permitted to see Chrodechildis. A Roman named Aurelianus is then despatched thither. Disguised as a beggar, he gets an opportunity to speak privately with the king's daughter, who is at Geneva.

<sup>1</sup> Fredegar, III, 17-19, ed. Krusch, pp. 99-101.

He tells her that he is the messenger of Chlodovech, king of the Franks, who wishes to marry her. Delighted with the proposal, she rewards Aurelianus for the execution of his mission, and bestows upon him a ring. She then bids him hasten home to his master and say that if the king wishes to wed her he must send men at once to Gundobad to solicit her hand; for if the wise Aridius return first from Constantinople, the king's suit will be unsuccessful. Aurelianus, after an adventurous journey, reaches home, and gives this message to Chlodovech, who immediately sends envoys to Gundobad. Gundobad does not dare to refuse the request, and gives Chrodechildis, with much treasure, into the charge of Chlodovech's men. They raise her up in a chair, intending to carry her; but when the news comes that Aridius has returned, they abandon the chair at her request, put her on a horse, and ride away together in all haste. Aridius, learning what has happened, goes immediately to Gundobad, and induces him to send out an army to recover Chrodechildis. But the pursuers find only the chair, and the treasure which it contains. When the king's daughter draws near the place where Chlodovech is waiting, before she crosses the border, she bids her escort harry and burn the land of the Burgundians in a large district round about, in order to have revenge on Gundobad.

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The story of the winning of Chrodechildis by Chlodovech is also given in *Liber Historiae Francorum*<sup>1</sup> (usually called *Gesta Francorum*), a comparatively poor production, which, however, circulated widely in the middle

<sup>1</sup> Ed. Krusch, pp. 254-257.

ages. It was composed in Neustria in 727. This version is much altered by the introduction of a marked religious element which was foreign to the original version; and in secular features also it shows considerable variation from Fredegar's account. We may note the following differences: (1) When Aurelianus disguises himself as a beggar, he leaves his own clothes with his comrades who remain behind in a forest. (2) Chlodovech threatens Gundobad with war if he will not give Chrodechildis in marriage to him. Gundobad refuses at first.

In the version of the monk Aimoin, which follows that in *Lib. Hist. Francorum*, we read that when Aurelianus dresses up as a beggar, he bids his companions conceal themselves in a wood. Here, too, it is said that Chlodovech later, after having wedded Crotildis, makes a harrying expedition into the land of the Burgundians at the instigation of his wife, who wished to have revenge for the death of her kinsmen.

If, now, we compare the three stories of Hjórvarth, Attila, and Chlodovech respectively, we observe that the first two have some features in common in opposition to the Frankish tale (C). (1) In H and A messengers are despatched to the bride's father, not, as in C, to her uncle. (2) In both H and A the suitor is definitely rejected by the foreign king. To this the account in *Lib. Hist. Franc.* lies nearest. (3) In both H and A there is another king who woos the king's daughter; and in both the bridegroom himself sets out with an army before the wedding. C says nothing of this, or of the events closely connected with it. (4) H and A have



the names *Sváfaland*<sup>1</sup> and *Atli* (*Attila*) in common. Yet the Frankish chronicles relate that Chlodovech waged war with the Swabians or Alamannians. (5) In both H and A the story ends with a double wedding; for the messenger marries the companion of the king's daughter.<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand, however, the story of how Attila wins his bride agrees with the story of Chlodovech in not a few points where the poem on Hjórvarth differs: (1) In A and C the king's daughter is kept under surveillance together with her sister. Yet A, in which the princess who later marries the foreign king is waited upon by her sister, is the closer to H, where the companion is an earl's daughter.<sup>3</sup> (2) In both A and C the

<sup>1</sup> I cannot, therefore, agree with Sijmons in Paul-Braune, *Beit.*, iv, 185, who thinks that *Sváfaland* in the prose is found after the name of the King *Svafnir* in the verse, and that this name is genuine O.N., of the same origin as Odin's name and that of the serpent *Svafnir*. I share with Uhland (*Schriften*, vii, 129) and F. Jónsson (*Lit. Hist.*, i, 250) the opposite opinion that *Svafnir* is made up from the folk-name contained in *Sváfaland*, the form being determined by the native names of the serpent and of Odin.

Jessen (*Eddalieder*, p. 5, note 1) says: 'Dass die Prosastückchen Kriege in den "Südlanden," speciel "Schwabenlande" erwähnen, . . . beweist, dass wir eine späte Gestaltung der Sage vor uns haben, aus der Zeit, wo man es liebte den Schauplatz ins Enorme zu erweitern, wie das in der Hervararsaga und andern *Fornaldarsögur* geschieht.' On the contrary, I have, I think, proved that the name *Sváfaland* belonged to the story in its oldest Norse form, and that it is to be explained by the fact that from the very beginning the story was subjected to foreign influence.

<sup>2</sup> On double and triple weddings in later Scandinavian tales, see A. Olrik, *Saksnes Oldhist.*, i, 46 f.

<sup>3</sup> We have a variation of the same kind in the mediæval versions of the story of Jason and Medea. According to the *Trójumanna saga*, Medea sends her sister to Jason, but in Benoît de Ste. More and the Irish *Togail Troi* she sends a handmaid. That in this point the *Trójumanna saga* preserves the more original form of the story, is seen from Ovid, *Heroides*, xii, 65 ff.

suitor threatens war if he does not get the king's daughter. (3) In both the bridegroom's messenger leaves his companions behind in a forest while he, in disguise and without any following, seeks to gain admittance to the presence of the princess. (4) In both he succeeds in talking with her in private, and tells her that his master will make her queen. (5) In both she gives her consent to the proposed marriage, and the messenger departs with her ring. (6) In both A and C the princess rides away with the messenger of the foreign king. They are pursued, but yet come safely to the bridegroom.

It seems clear that the story of Attila's expedition to bring home his bride is an imitation of the story of Chlodovech.

The points of contact between the O.N. poem alone, as opposed to the Attila story, and the Frankish account, are far less numerous. Yet we may observe the following: The foreign king's counsellor Fránmar, who is said to be wise in magic, persuades his master to reject the offer of marriage. In the Frankish story, Aridius, who is said to be wise (*sapiens*), induces the King of the Burgundians to send out warriors to hinder the marriage.

In the O.N. poem, which evidently stands in historical connection with the Chlodovech story, the name *Sigrínn* is not the only thing which points to a Frankish saga.<sup>1</sup> Hjórvarth, the hero of the O.N. story, is Helgi's father. Chlodovech, the hero of the Frankish story,

<sup>1</sup> That *Alof* as the name of the royal bride's companion had its origin in *Saedeleuba*, the Frankish name of the royal bride's sister, is quite possible, and seems to me probable; but it cannot be proved.

is Theuderik's father. Theuderik is called in heroic poems *Hugo Theodoricus*, Hugu Dietrich, the name of the king who is represented as Woldietrich's father. Now, as I have already pointed out, the story of an encounter with a mermaid was transferred from the Frankish hero corresponding to Woldietrich, to Helgi Hjörvarthsson. It looks, therefore, as if an O.N. poet, either in Britain, or, less probably, in Normandy, heard some version of the Frankish story of Chlodovech's wooing, which he transferred (changing it under the influence of related stories) to Hjörvarth, Helgi's father, because he knew that Chlodovech was Theuderik's father.

This conjecture is supported by the fact that the Lay of Hjörvarth and his son Helgi shows traces of other Merovingian stories of events and persons of about the same period.

Chlodovech's son Theuderik was married to a daughter of the Burgundian king Sigimund, son of Gundobad. Theuderik's brother Chlodomer set out on an expedition against the Burgundians, took Sigimund captive, and ordered him (though his brother's father-in-law) to be killed in the year 524. Chlodomer called on Theuderik for help when he marched into the land of the Burgundians. Theuderik promised aid; but, according to inferior MSS. of Gregory of Tours, he thought of revenging his father-in-law. In the expedition against the Burgundians Chlodomer fell. Fredegar relates that he was deceived by the auxiliaries which Theuderik, Sigimund's son-in-law, had sent him.

In my opinion, we have a trace of *Chlodomer* in



*Hróðmarr* of the Eddic poem. The latter was a suitor of Sigrlinn before she became Hjørvarth's wife. Being unsuccessful, he kills her father, and plunders and burns in his land. He is afterwards killed by Helgi, p. 266. who, for the expedition against Hróthmar, obtains auxiliaries from his father Hjørvarth.

The names *Chlothildis* and *Chrothildis* were interchangeable among the Franks. It was very natural for Scandinavians to alter in like manner the Frankish name *Chlodomer* into *Hróðmarr*, because the first part of the name, *Hlod-*, *Chlodo-*, was not used in Scandinavian names, except in the case of Chlodovech or Ludwig, which was reproduced by *Hlōðvér*.

That the O.N. poem has in this incident completely distorted the historical course of events, is not surprising.

Helgi Hjørvarthsson's love is called *Sváfa*. Theuderik's wife was called *Suavegotta*, according to Flodoardus.<sup>1</sup> Gregory of Tours tells (III, chap. 5), that Theuderik (in the year 522) married the daughter of the Burgundian king Sigimund; but he does not give her name. This daughter must have been *Suavegotta*;<sup>2</sup> and of her name the *Sváfa* of the Eddic poem may be a shortened form. We may compare *Berta*=*Bertrada*, *Lioba*=*Liobgytha*, *Hruada*=*Hruadlanga*, and similar

<sup>1</sup> *Historia Remensis*, II, chap. 1<sup>1</sup>; *Bibl. max. patr.*, XVII, p. 530.

<sup>2</sup> Dettér, in Sievers, *Beit.*, XVIII, 96-98, points out resemblances between *Svanhvita* in Saxo (ed. Müller, Bk. II, p. 96), on the one hand, and *Sváfa*, together with *Sigrún*, on the other. He concludes from this that *Sváfa*, for \**Svanfa*, is an abbreviation of *Svanhvít*. I cannot accept this explanation. The poem on *Svanhvita* and *Regnerus* is a comparatively late poem. It has features borrowed both from the Helgi-poems and from the Wayland-lay. From the latter *Svanhvita* got her name.

German names;<sup>1</sup> also the A.S. gen. pl. *Hræda*, *Hrēða* alongside \**Hrædgotan*, *Hrēðgotan*, the gen. pl. *Wedera* alongside *Wedergéatas*, the form used by Latin authors *Visi* (sing. *Vesus*) synonymous with *Visigothae*.

Since *Suavegotta* was the daughter of a Burgundian king, *Suáfa* may possibly, before she was made into  
p. 267. the daughter of Eylimi,<sup>2</sup> have contributed to the naming of *Sváfaland* in the O.N. poem, where the corresponding Burgundian story mentioned the land of the Burgundians.<sup>3</sup>

But in the description of *Sváfa*, the O.N. poem is completely at variance with history. In the *Hrímgerth*-lay, after the model of *Sigrún*, she is represented as a woman with supernatural powers.

## XXI

## ATLI'S TWO ENCOUNTERS WITH A SUPERNATURAL BIRD.

p. 268. THERE are two incidents in the *Hjörvarth*-lay of which there seems to be no trace, either in the story of Attila in the *Þiðrekssaga* or in the Frankish tale of Chlodovech: (1) the conversation of the earl's son Atli with a bird, who talks to him of Sigrlinn; and (2) Atli's shooting with a spear the earl Fránmar, who has taken the form of an eagle. There are similar features

<sup>1</sup> According to Stark, *Kösenamen*, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> I intend to discuss the name *Eylimi* (which is also borne by the grandfather of Sigurth Fáfnisbani) in my treatment of the Sigurth-story.

<sup>3</sup> *Sváfa*, in Hyndl., 17, is a different person.

in the Scandinavian ballad *Raadengaard and the Eagle*,<sup>1</sup> which is known in Danish and Norwegian forms.

Rigen Raadengaard, while riding alone in the grove in the early morning, listens to the cry of the eagle of Bejerlund (*i.e.* 'the grove by the dwelling'). The eagle says that it will visit him, and asks what food he will give it. Raadengaard offers oxen, cows, and fat horses. But the bird declares that it must have his two fair foster-daughters.<sup>2</sup> 'God forbid!' says Raadengaard; p. 269. whereupon the eagle exclaims, 'I will do thee still greater harm; I will devour thy betrothed.' Then Raadengaard writes runes under the eagle's wings, so that it is bound fast. He rides to his betrothed, and weds her without delay.

This ballad came to Norway and to the Faroes from Denmark. It is localised in Vendsyssel.

Its resemblance to the Eddic poem is not confined to the general feature that a bird begins a conversation with a young chieftain; there is close similarity in details: (1) Atli, like Raadengaard, talks with the bird when he is alone in a grove. (2) The bird demands of Atli gold-horned cows, which (as we may infer from the words in the lay) Atli pledges himself to give. In the ballad Raadengaard promises the eagle oxen,

<sup>1</sup> Grundtvig, *Danm. gl. Folkev.*, No. 12; Bugge, *Gamle norske Folkeviser*, No. 3. This similarity has already been pointed out by Grundtvig, *l.c.*, I, 174.

<sup>2</sup> Danish A has *sister*, C *sisters*, B '*førster*,' 6<sup>a</sup>, but *sisters* 8<sup>1</sup>; the Norw. ballad *foster-daughters*. Originally it was possibly *fostrer* (= O.N. *fóstrur*) or *foster* (from *et foster*, a foster-child). In favour of this view we have the following words in the ballad: 'I have kept them so honourably ever since their father died'; for, if *sisters* were right, we should expect 'our father,' not 'their father,' although the latter could, indeed, pass for half-sisters.



cows, and fat horses. (3) Atli says to the bird that it must not demand Hjørvarth or his sons or his fair wives. In the ballad, the eagle says that it must have Raadengaard's foster-daughters (sisters)—which the hero begs God not to allow—and, finally, that it must have his betrothed. (4) The ballad concludes with Raadengaard's binding of the eagle with runes, and with his speedy marriage to his betrothed, whom the eagle has threatened to eat up. According to the Eddic poem, the magician Fránmar, in the form of an eagle, sits on the house in which his foster-daughter Sigrlinn, and his daughter Alof have taken refuge, and tries to guard them by magic. But one night, when the bird is asleep, Atli comes and pierces it with a spear. He takes both women away with him. Sigrlinn, of her own free will, marries King Hjørvarth, while Atli weds Álof. This has some similarity with the conclusion of the ballad.

In the poetry of the later Christian Middle Ages, the binding of a dangerous being with runes is a favourite feature. In opposition to this, the Eddic poem represents the eagle as pierced by a spear. A similar difference may be observed between the old Icelandic tale of how Ketil Høng shot a mermaid with an arrow, and the modern Swedish story of how Kettil Runske bound a mermaid with his rune-stick.<sup>1</sup>

Raadengaard, who binds the eagle with runes, is identical with the hero of the same name in the ballad of 'King Didrik and his Champions';<sup>2</sup> for there we

<sup>1</sup> Grundtvig, *l.c.*, II, 92.

<sup>2</sup> In the ballad 'Raadengaard and the Eagle,' Danish A has *Raffuenn-gard*, *Rauffuennngaard*; B, *Raanegaardt*, *Ronegaard*; C, *Raadengaard*;

read of him: 'He knows well the runes,' and he bears in his shield 'the brown eagle.'

But this Raadengaard, who in the Danish ballad last named is one of Didrik's champions, was evidently regarded (as Grundtvig has pointed out, vol. i. p. 73), as identical with Rüdegêr von Bechelaren in German heroic saga, who is connected in many ways with Dietrich. In the *Þiðrekssaga* he is called *Róðingeir af Bakalar*.

In one redaction of the *Þiðrekssaga* (chaps. 43, 44), this *Róðingeir* woos the daughter of Ósangtrix on Attila's behalf. I have pointed out above that *Róðingeir*, as Attila's messenger, corresponds to *Atli* in the O.N. Lay of Hjórvarth. Since, now, the poem concerning Atli and the bird is, as I have shown, related with the ballad of 'Raadengaard and the Eagle,' we may suppose that Atli has taken the place of *Róðingeir* or Raadengaard, not only as the messenger, but also as the person who converses with the bird.

Some form of the West-Germanic story of Attila's wooing, current in Britain, may be supposed to have had an episode, lacking in the *Þiðrekssaga*, regarding Attila's messenger *Róðingeir* and a supernatural bird, which episode corresponded to the Danish ballad of 'Raadengaard and the Eagle,' and recurs in the incident of Atli and the bird in the Hjórvarth-lay.

The hero's name, in the ballad of 'Rodengaard (Raadengaard) and the Eagle,' must have been drawn p. 271. (directly or indirectly) from an *English*, and not from a

the Norwegian ballad *Rodenigår*. In the ballad 'Didrik and his Champions,' Danish A H has *Raadengaard*; G, *Radenngaard*; D, *Rauffen-gaard*.

German source. This is clear from the vowel *â* (*aa*) in the last syllable of the name. The name is evidently a reproduction of an English form in *-gâr*, while the Low German form corresponding to *-gâr* is *-gêr*.

There is another circumstance which strengthens the supposition that the hero Rodengaar got his name from an English source. In the ballad published by Grundtvig (No. 13) under the name 'Ravengaard and Memering,' which was also known in England and Scotland, there appears a person of the same name as the hero who binds the eagle with runes; and he is called in English, in Percy's Folio MS., *Sir Aldingar* (from the pronunciation *Sir Râdingâr*); in Scotch, in Sir Walter Scott's collection, *Rodingham*; in a biography of Edward the Confessor, written in French somewhat before 1272 (which appears to have been translated from Latin), *Rodegan*, this form of the name arising from *Rodingar* by the influence of *Mimecan*, which is the name of his opponent in the ballad. Finally, the same person is called in John Brompton's English chronicle (second half of the fourteenth century), *Roddyngar*, and in an old marginal note in an English MS., *Rodingar*.<sup>1</sup>

There are several circumstances<sup>2</sup> which go to show that this slanderer was regarded as identical with

<sup>1</sup> For full information on this ballad, see Child, *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, III, 37-38.

<sup>2</sup> (1) The maligned queen's husband in the Faroe and Icelandic versions (Grundtvig's D, E, F) is called Didrik. (2) Raadengaard's opponent Mimmering is also mentioned as Didrik's champion. (3) Moreover, *Iselgrim* and *Hercules Graa*, who are mentioned in the Norwegian version of the ballad (Grundtvig, II, 644), also belong to the Didrik-cycle. Likewise the sword *Adelring* in Danish A. Cf. Grundtvig, I, 203.



Didrik's champion of the same name (in Grundtvig's No. 7), who bound the eagle with runes.

We may suppose therefore that the Scandinavians in England had a story, probably in poetic form, corresponding to the Lay of Hjørvarth and Sigrlinn, in which the king's messenger who set out to woo for him, bore the name *Rodingår* (which was borrowed from English), and met a supernatural eagle. p. 272.

That the Rodengaar who in the ballad binds the eagle with runes, in the more original form of the story met the eagle when he set out to woo for his king and for himself at the same time, agrees well with the fact that in the ballad his marriage takes place after his meeting with the eagle. Since it is said, in the other Danish ballad of which we have spoken (No. 7), that he has the eagle as a mark in his shield, we see further that the meeting with the eagle must have taken place in his youth.

The eagle-episode as found in the Eddic Lay is obscure and curious. In the conversation between Atli and the eagle, the eagle seems to be regarded as a god in bird form, who wishes to help Hjørvarth, just as Odin aids the *Völsungs*.<sup>1</sup>

But even if we accept this view, the nature of the bird is still obscure; for we learn nothing of its later doings. It would, moreover, be very remarkable if the poem from the outset had two great supernatural birds different from each other. Further, this theory would

<sup>1</sup> This view Müllenhoff (*Ztsch. f. d. Alt.*, XXIII, 142) thinks correct. Simrock, moreover (in his translation), is of the opinion that the bird who talks with Atli is a god, and has no connection with the bird which Atli kills.

also leave unexplained the relation of the poem to the Danish ballad; for the eagle in the ballad corresponds, on the one hand, to the bird with which Atli talks, and on the other, to the eagle which he kills.

I am, therefore, of the opinion that in a more original form of the story the bird with which Atli talks was identical with that which Atli kills, viz. the magic-wise earl transformed into an eagle.<sup>1</sup>

We may also suppose that a story known in England, corresponding to the Hjørvarth-lay, had the motive p. 273. that an earl at the court of the king whose daughter was wooed, opposed her marriage with the chief hero of the poem. He sought to hinder it by magic, and therefore transformed himself into an eagle; but in this form he was killed by the messenger Rodingâr, who thereby won a bride for the king and another for himself.

There is no trace of the supernatural eagle in the *Þiðrekssaga*, where Róthingeir or Rótholf brings Attila his bride, and where Ósangtrix's earl Hertnit and the latter's brother Hirthir enthusiastically support the suit of Attila's rival. Nor is there any trace of it in the Frankish story, where Aurelianus plays a rôle which corresponds to Atli's in the O.N. poem, and to that of Rótholf or Róthingeir in the *Þiðrekssaga*, and where Aridius at the court of the King of the Burgundians, like Fránmar at that of the King of Sváfaland, opposes the marriage of the king's daughter with the chief hero of the tale.

How did the motive of the supernatural bird arise?

<sup>1</sup> This opinion is shared by Grundtvig, I, 174, and F. Jónsson, *Litt. Hist.*, I, 246.

On this point I would make the following suggestion.

In the O.N. story we read that the earl Fránmar transformed himself into an eagle, and guarded the two women by magic. This Fránmar, who advises the king to reject King Hjörvarth's suit, corresponds to Aridius in the Frankish tale, who by his representations induces the Burgundian king to send out an army to recover Chrodechildis and to prevent her marriage with Chlodovech. Now, Aridius is called in Fredegar *sapiens* and *prudētissimus*. A corresponding expression might easily have been taken by the Scandinavians to mean 'wise in magic,' just as a similar development in meaning may be traced in O.N. *fjǫlkunnigr*, *fræði*, *fróðleikr*, *kunnátta*.

What connection there is between the name *Aridius*, or *Aredius* (as it is also written in Gregory of Tours, and in *Lib. Hist. Francorum*), and Lat. *aridus*, I shall not say. But by Germanic peoples, at any rate, the name might easily have been regarded as a compound, *Ari-dius*, *Are-dius*. The Franks had very many names of men of which the Latin form of the last part was *-deus*, as e.g. p. 274. in Irminos Polyptychon, *Aclèdeus*, *Aldèdeus*, *Agedeus*, *Ansedeus*, and many others. It should be mentioned also that the Franks could write in Latin *-eus* instead of *-ius*. This we see from forms like *Galleae*, *ostenum*, *palleis*, etc., in the oldest MSS. of Gregory of Tours. Such compound names in *-deus*, as e.g. *Ansedeus*, had in different West-Germanic dialects forms in *-deo*, *-dio*, *-diu*. Further, *Are-*, *Ari-* could be used as the first part of Frankish names of persons, e.g. *Arigis*, pol. Rem., *Aregis*, pol. Irm., *Arehildis* or *Arechildis*, pol. Rem.



This first part of the compound must be explained by a word corresponding to Goth. *ara*, O.N. *ari*, 'eagle,' but could easily be confused with *Hari-*, *Chari-*, from a word corresponding to Goth. *harjis*, 'army.' Among other Germanic races occurs the name *Arintheo*, in Latin written *Arintheus*, in Greek Ἀρινθαῖος. Frankish names in *-deus* correspond to O.N. names in *-þér*, *-ðir*, e.g. *Hamðir*. In O.N. no special meaning was attached to this element *-þér*, *-ðir*; for we see that *Egðir*, *Eggþér* is used by poets as the name of an eagle, and *Sigðir*, *Sigþér* as Odin's name. It was, therefore, natural for the Germanic peoples to give to the name *Aridius*, *Aredius*, the meaning 'the eagle-man.'

The story of the wise *Aridius*, 'the eagle-man,' who opposed the marriage of Chlodovech and Chrodechildis, was told, as I suppose, by Englishmen to heathen or half-heathen Scandinavians, and from it some O.N. poet made up the story of the magic-wise earl who transformed himself into an eagle to hinder the marriage of Hjørvarth and Sigrlinn. This story took its present form in the imagination of the O.N. poet under the influence of mythical and romantic conceptions of supernatural birds, especially eagles, with which the poet may have been familiar from native tales, or from those which came from the West. We are reminded, e.g., of the giant Thjassi who, in eagle-form, demands his fill of the ox that the gods wish to cook. *Hræsvelgr* (corpse-devourer) is the name of a giant who had the form of an eagle; the motion of his wings causes the winds. Odin himself takes the form of an eagle.

On the other hand, it may be noted that a modern

Norwegian tale<sup>1</sup> has a king's son changed into an eagle p. 275, which eats up a whole ox, and thereupon flies away with the hero of the story on its back, to rescue him from peril in the mountain.

The earl who transforms himself into an eagle, is called in the O.N. poem *Fránmarr*, from the adjective *fránn*, which has about the same meaning as the Latin *coruscus*, and is used of serpents. If I am right in my conjecture that this saga-figure has his origin in Aridius in the Frankish tale, the questions still remain: How did he get his O.N. name? and how well does this name suit the conjecture as to Aridius which I have just made? The following is an attempt at an explanation.

Both Gregory of Tours (II, 32) and the *Liber Hist. Francorum* mention *virum inlustrem Aridium*. When the story was carried over from the Franks to the English, *vir illustris* may have been translated into A.S. by *fréamêre* (or *frêmcêre*) *eorl*. From this an O.N. poet could have made the name *Fránmarr Jarl*.<sup>2</sup>

Gregory tells<sup>3</sup> how Aridius later (in the year 500),

<sup>1</sup> 'The Eagle my Companion,' in *Folke-Eventyr*, ed. Kristofer Janson, p. 37. In an Irish story in the Book of Leinster (fol. 168 b) *Mossad mac Móin* finds a vulture (*séig*) and supplies it with food. It tears to pieces horses and cattle and human beings. Finally it eats up its own master.

<sup>2</sup> Observe that Magnus the Good got his name from the surname of Charlemagne, and that the latter in a Swedish ms. of the fifteenth century is called 'Konung Magnus' (Munch, *Norske Folks Hist.*, b, p. 666), in the ballad of Roland, *Magnus Kongjen*. In what follows I shall try to show that *Ribold* (*Rikeball*), the name of the hero of a ballad, arose from the epithet *rikr baldr* in an old poem. The Icel. *svanni*, 'woman,' is changed into the name *Svanelille* in several Danish and Norwegian ballads. See Grundtvig and S. Bugge in *Danm. gl. Folkev.*, II, 81 f, and III, 823 a.

<sup>3</sup> *Gregor. Turon. Hist. Franc.*, lib. II, cap. 32; *Fredegar*, lib. III, cap. 23.

when Chlodovech after his marriage wages war against Gundobad, employs cunning to save Gundobad's life. p. 276. He comes to Chlodovech and gives himself out for Gundobad's enemy. The king receives him and keeps him at his court; for Aridius could converse well and give useful counsel (*Erat enim iocundus in fabulis, strenuus in consiliis*). He humbly begs Chlodovech to hear his word, and advises him to spare Gundobad's life, but to make him pay tribute, in order that Chlodovech may thereby induce Gundobad to surrender the more quickly and come to rule over him and his land. Gundobad promises to pay the tribute demanded.

It looks as if we had a fantastic and indistinct echo of this in the incident in the O.N. poem that Fránmar, transformed into a wise bird (*fugl fróðhugaðr*), comes to Atli's dwelling and makes as if he would help Hjørvarth to win Sigrlinn, although later he tries to prevent it. He begs Atli to listen to what he has to say. He then demands sacrifices, which Atli is willing to procure for him, in order to get Sigrlinn to follow Hjørvarth of her own free will; but, in making the agreement with Atli, the bird discusses the sparing of Hjørvarth's life.

According to this conjecture, therefore, a feature which in the Frankish saga belongs to an event which takes place after Chlodovech's marriage, would seem to have been carried over in a new form into the O.N. poem in the account of how Hjørvarth won his bride.

Such a conjecture may appear too bold; but it is supported by the fact that the feature above mentioned occurs in an altered form in the story of Attila's wooing



in the *Þiðrekssaga*. Rotholf comes to Ósangtrix, feigns to be Attila's enemy, and is received by the king. Here we have an obvious imitation of the following incidents: Aridius comes to Chlodovech, feigns to be Gundobad's enemy, and is received by the king of the Franks.<sup>1</sup>

I have tried to make it probable that Atli, in one of p. 277. the stories on which the Lay of Hjórvarth and Sigrlinn is based, as well as in the *Þiðrekssaga*, was the name of the chief hero of the story, viz. of the king who would wed the foreign king's daughter. If so, then we may suppose that in the tradition which was the source of our poem, the Atli with whom the transformed earl talked was the chief hero, the king for whom the foreign king's daughter was wooed, just as it is Chlodovech in the Frankish story with whom Aridius converses.

Very frequently in popular heroic poems the form of the story presupposes a fusion of several different historical personages having the same name. We seem to have an instance of this in the poem under discussion.

The story of Fránmar, who in eagle-form talks with Atli, presupposes, as I take it, the fusion of that Aridius who was Chlodovech's contemporary with a later Aridius who was Abbot of Limoges at the end of the sixth century, and one of the canonised saints. Of him Gregory of Tours relates (x, 29) that a dove hovered over him, alighted on his head or on his shoulders, and followed him constantly, the explanation

<sup>1</sup> Ósangtrix says to Rótholf, who has given himself out as Attila's enemy: *þú ert maðr vitr ok góðr drengr, trúlyndr ok réttorðr* ('thou art a wise man and good fellow, faithful and of just speech') chap. 49. We read of Aridius, when he is with Chlodovech: *Erat . . . strenuus in consiliis, iustus in iudiciis et in commisso fidelis*.

being that he was full of the Holy Spirit. This seems to have something to do with the fact that the poem represents Fránmar, who corresponds to Chlodovech's contemporary Aridius, as transforming himself into a bird. That it is an eagle, and not a dove, whose form Fránmar takes, is due partly to the name of his prototype *Aridius*, which was thought of as *Ari-deus*, partly to the fact that the eagle, unlike the dove, was a well-known bird in Scandinavian mythology.

The holy Aridius performed many miracles in curing the sick, etc. This may have helped to bring it about that Fránmar is called wise in magic. In the conversation with Atli the bird demands divine sacrifice (*blóta*, p. 278. H. Hj., 2), temples and altars (*hof mun ek kjósa, horga marga*, H. Hj., 4). This is doubtless the heathen O.N. poet's fantastic interpretation of the statements made about the holy Aridius: he claimed as his only privilege the building of churches. He raised temples to the honour of the saints of God, and founded a monastery.<sup>1</sup>

In the *Þiðrekssaga*, the episode of the false deserter is transferred from the enemy of the suitor-king to this king's faithful follower. Such a transference did not take place in the O.N. poem, which in this respect, therefore, adheres more closely to the Frankish tale.

As I have already hinted, the O.N. poet, by his alterations in this feature, made the course of the story and its *motivierung* obscure.

Aridius seeks to prevent Chlodovech's marriage with

<sup>1</sup> 'Unum sibi tantum privilegium vindicans, ut ad ecclesias aedificandas ipse praeesset. . . Construxit templa in Dei honore sanctorum . . . cenobiumque fundavit.'

Chrodechildis. In the *þiðrekssaga*, chap. 49, the earl Hertnit and his brother Hirthir enthusiastically support the suit of Northung, Attila's rival, for the king's daughter Erca. We must, therefore, imagine Hertnit and Hirthir to have been opposed to Attila's suit. In the complete story they doubtless advised Ósangtrix openly to refuse his daughter's hand to Attila. The earl Hertnit and his brother Hirthir correspond, then, in this connection to Aridius in the Frankish tale.

The alteration in the name may be explained in the following way: *Aridius* was, perhaps, thought by the Germans to stand for *Hari-deo*, *Heri-deo* (which name occurs several times), *Herdeo*; and from this *Herdeo*, possibly through an (etymologically different) Low German *Herder*, we may get the form *Hirðir* of our story.<sup>1</sup>

The *þiðrekssaga* mentions, following Low German accounts, three Hertnids in Slavic lands.<sup>2</sup> One, Hertnid of Holmgard (Novgorod) has a brother *Hirðir* (chap. 22). One of the sons of this Hertnid is Ósangtrix of Vilcinaland. Another Hertnid, an earl at Ósangtrix's court, is son of the Earl Ilias of Russia. His brother is also called Hirthir in a version in the Stockholm MS. This Hertnid plays a prominent part in the story of Ósangtrix in the *þiðrekssaga*. p. 279.

The fact that the Earl Hertnid and his brother Hirthir, in the story of Attila's wooing, correspond to

<sup>1</sup> According to Müllenhoff (*Ztsch. f. d. Alt.*, XII, 348), *Hirðir* = Low Ger. *Herder*, O.S. *Hardheri*. This is supported by the fact that the Swedish translation, chap. 17, calls another person of that name now *Hirder*, now *Herder*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Müllenhoff, as above.



Aridius in the tale of Chlodovech (of which the Attila-story is an imitation), may be explained as follows: Even before the Attila-story arose, Herder may have been known as a brother of Hertnid, who was an earl at the court of Ósangtrix. When, now, the name Aridius, because of the similarity in sound, was changed (through Harideo, Herideo, Herdeo) to Herder, this Herder, who opposed the saga-king's winning of his bride, was identified by the Germans with Herder, Hertnid's brother. This identification not only suggested the naming of Earl Hertnid along with his brother Herder as opponents of the suit, but also helped to bring it about that the story of the king's wooing was transferred from Gundobad, Chrodechildis, and Chlodovech, to Ósangtrix, Erca, and Attila; so that the action was carried from the lands of the Franks and of the Burgundians to districts in the north-east.

Thus, in my opinion, the Lay of Hjörvarth, Helgi's father, was composed by a Scandinavian poet in England, after the model of various West-Germanic (particularly Frankish) heroic stories closely related with one another. The O.N. form preserved in the Edda was not the only Scandinavian treatment of the story. The ballad of Raadengaard and the Eagle presupposes  
 p. 280, another Scandinavian (most likely Danish) version known in England, in which the king's messenger was not called Atli, but Rodengaar (Raadengaard), just as Róthingeir is named as messenger in one version of the *Þiðrekssaga*.

From the name Atli in the Hjörvarth-lay, I have inferred that the Norseman who gave the story its

extant form, knew a version of the foreign tale in which Atli (Attila), as in the *Þiðrekssaga*, was the hero for whom the messenger wins the foreign king's daughter. In this version the messenger was doubtless called *Rodringár*. But, even if I am right in this, it is probable that the foreign version, which the author of the Lay of Hǫrvarth knew in one of the British Isles, varied both in the forms of the names and in saga-features from the account in the *Þiðrekssaga*, although in just what particulars it is impossible now to determine.

It seems to me probable that some at any rate of the Frankish episodes which influenced the O.N. poem, had indirectly a literary source. I consider it as especially probable that we have in the Lay an echo of Gregory's written account of St. Aridius in the *Historia Francorum*. On the other hand, the other Frankish features may, like the written accounts of Gregory and Fredegar, have been drawn from oral Frankish tradition.

In several of the proper names in the story of Hǫrvarth and Sigrlinn, we see a tendency to avoid forms which had a foreign sound, and to insert Norse names instead. Thus in the Lay we have *Álof* instead of *Saedeleuba* in the Frankish tale, *Atli* instead of *Rodengaar* in the ballad, and *Hróðmarr* instead of the Frankish *Chlodomer*. Even the chief hero of the story is replaced by a Scandinavian saga-hero.

Atli is called in H. Hj., 2, 'the son of Ithmund' (in the MS. *íþmundar*). In agreement with this, we read in p. 281. the prose account of Hǫrvarth: 'His earl was called Ithmund; Ithmund's son was Atli.' Of the name of Atli's father, which in the form *Iðmundr* has no parallel

in any other story, I venture to propose a bold explanation. I have given reasons for the opinion that Atli, the name of the earl's son, was borrowed from a story in which this name was borne by the famous King of the Huns. The father<sup>1</sup> of this king was called by Jordanes *Mundzucus*, by Priscus Μουνδίουχος, which Müllenhoff has explained<sup>2</sup> as a Germanic \**Mundiwi*h. It was doubtless after this father of Attila that one of Attila's descendants was called *Mundo*.<sup>3</sup> Perhaps, then, there is some connection between these two names *Ǫmundr* and *Mundo*.<sup>4</sup>

We have seen that Hjórvarth's messenger Atli corresponds to Chlodovech's messenger Aurelianus in the Frankish tale. The home of Aurelianus is Orléans, *Aurelianensium territorium*.<sup>5</sup> The place where Atli dwells is called *at Glasislundi* (H. Hj., 1). This name was influenced by an O.N. myth: *Glasir* was the name of a tree (*lundr*) with *golden* foliage, which stood before

p. 282.

<sup>1</sup> In the *Þiðrekssaga* Attila's father is called *Osið*, and he is represented as a king of Friesland.

<sup>2</sup> In *Ztsch. f. d. Alt.*, x, 160 f; in Mommsen's ed. of Jordanes, p. 152 b.

<sup>3</sup> *Mundo de Attilanis quondam origine descendens* (Jordanes, chap. 58, ed. Mommsen, p. 135).

<sup>4</sup> It is just possible that in an earlier form H. Hj., 2 read as follows:—

*Mundu við Atla*  
*við Mundar (or Munda) son,*  
*fugl fróðhugaðr!*  
*fleira mæla?*

'Wilt thou, wise bird, talk still more with Atli, the son of Mundi.' The word *við* would then be the A.S. *git* (pronounced *yit*) 'still,' which often occurs before a comparative. We should thus have circular alliteration (*Mundu* ~ *Mundar*, *Atla* ~ *við*). This *við*, from A.S. *git*, might be taken to support the opinion that the O.N. poet imitated an A.S. poem.

<sup>5</sup> Fredegar, III, 18, ed. Krusch, p. 100.



Valhöll. I would connect the O.N. name with the French. The Norse poet, I imagine, heard the name of Orléans, *Aureliani*, explained by *aurum*, gold, and therefore reproduced it by *at Glasis lundi*, from *Glasis*, the tree with the golden foliage.<sup>1</sup>

In the conversation with Atli, the bird demands as sacrifices *gold-horned cows* (*gullhyrndar kýr*, H. Hj., 4). This phrase also occurs in *þrymskviða*, 23, where the giant Thrym says that gold-horned cows go about in his courts.<sup>2</sup> It is worth while to mention here certain parallels to this feature in Irish poetry. In the old Irish story of the Battle of Ross na Ríg, we read of an ox with two horns of gold.<sup>3</sup> In a modern Irish popular story,<sup>4</sup> a giant has five hundred oxen with golden horns and silver hoofs. Yet gold-horned cows are to be found elsewhere.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hjörvarth's men are obliged to wade across *Samorn* (H. Hj., 5) on their way to Svávaland. The name of this river must have been regarded as a combination of *sar*, sea, and the river-name *Morn* (Snorri's Edda, 11, 576, alongside *Mörn*); but it is probably a working-over of the name of a foreign river. Could this river be the *Saugonna*, *Saogonna* (i.e. *Sabne*; see Fredegar, ed. Krusch, pp. 141, 167)?

<sup>2</sup> H. Hj., 5, *Hofum erfiði ok ekki þrindi*, shows also similarity with *þrk.*, 11, *Hefi ek erfiði ok þrindi*.

<sup>3</sup> Hogan's edition, p. 7.

<sup>4</sup> Curtin, *Myths and Folk-Lore of Ireland*, p. 33.

<sup>5</sup> *Gesta Romanorum* (ed. Oesterley, chap. 111) has a corrupt account of the myth of Io, Argos, and Hermes, in which we read that 'quidam nobilis' had a cow which gave a full quantity of milk. 'Nobilis ille pre nimio amore ordinavit, quod vacca duo cornea aurea habuit.' Among the Greeks, the horns of animals offered in sacrifice were covered with gold: Homer, *Odyssey*, 111, 384, 426, 432-436. Egilsson adduces other examples from later Icelandic writings under *gullhyrnar*. Lünig says (*Die Edda*, p. 214): 'In Westphalen ist es heute noch hie und da sitte, bei festlichkeiten auf den bauern-höfen . . . die hörner der kühe mit goldschaum zu überziehen.'

p. 283. The Norwegian author of the Lay of Hjørvarth and Sigrlinn was himself a heathen, but he had heard from Christians the stories of the Frankish Christian kings and saints.

The poem shows us how strong was the myth-making imagination among the heathen Scandinavians who in Viking times travelled about in Britain. There is an incorrect idea fairly widespread, that of several forms of a story the one which is plainly mythical must necessarily be the oldest, and that it must go back to far-distant and obscure eras. The Lay of Hjørvarth and Sigrlinn gives us a good example of the development of the mythical element out of the historical.

## XXII

### THE HELGI-POEMS AND THE BALLADS OF RIBOLD AND OF HJELMER.

SVEND GRUNDTVIG has already expressed the opinion<sup>1</sup> that there is historical connection between the story in the Second Lay of Helgi Hundingsbani and the Scandinavian ballad of 'Ribold and Guldborg' (No. 82). The author of the ballad must have known the Eddic lay, or perhaps a corresponding old Danish poem, and must have borrowed from it a series of motives.

In the Edda, Sigrún follows her lover Helgi, although her father has pledged her to another king's son. In a

<sup>1</sup> *Danm. gl. Folkev.*, II, 340; cf. Child, *Eng. and Scot. Pop. Ballads*, I, 94.

battle Helgi slays her betrothed, her father, and all her brothers except Dag, whom he spares. Afterwards Dag kills Helgi treacherously.

In the ballad, Guldborg follows her lover Ribold, although she is betrothed to another man. Her father pursues the fugitive couple with a great company. In the ensuing struggle Ribold slays Guldborg's father and her betrothed, along with many of her nearest p. 284. kinsmen (according to some versions, her six brothers). She begs him to let her youngest brother live, at the same time addressing Ribold by his name. Then he gets his death-wound from her brother. In the English ballad (Child, No. 7 A), the only one of the father's men whom Earl Brand does not kill, steals up behind him and gives him a fatal wound in the back. There are, moreover, other points of contact between the Eddic poem and the ballad.

Guldborg says, before she rides away with Ribold, that all her kin are watching her: 'My betrothed is watching me; him I fear most.' Ribold answers: 'Even if all thy kin watch thee, thou shalt keep thy promise to me.' With this we may compare sts. 16, 18 of the Helgi-lay, where Sigrún expresses her fear of the anger of her father and relatives, and where Helgi answers that, nevertheless, she must follow him. The expression 'thy kin' occurs in both poems (H. H., II, 18; Rib., B 11). In one form of the old lay, Sigrún rides as a valkyrie through the air and over the sea, armed with helmet, birnie, and sword. This feature the ballad-writer in the Middle Ages could not preserve unchanged. He represents Guldborg, when she rides away with Ribold, as armed like a man, with helmet

on her head and sword by her side (Dan. B); but this costume is represented as a disguise. We may note further that the brides of both Helgi and Ribold die of sorrow.

But the ballad-poet must also have borrowed features from the Eddic Lay of Helgi Hjörvarthsson, or perhaps from an old Danish poem drawn from it.

In the Lay (st. 40) the dying Helgi tells his beloved Sváva that he is fatally wounded:

p. 285.

*tjá buðlungi  
blæða undir,  
mér hefir hjórr komit  
hjarta it næsta.*

'The chieftain has wounds which bleed; the sword has reached (come very near) my heart.' With this compare the words of the dying Ribold to Guldborg in the ballad: 'The first is that I am tired and sad; a second is that from me runs blood. Yet this is the worst of all for me: thy brother's sword has visited my heart.'<sup>1</sup>

Directly after these words are spoken, the dying

<sup>1</sup> The text of the ballad (Dan. A, 33, 34), is as follows:—

Det første er det, jeg er træt og mod,  
et andet er det, mig rinder Blod.  
Endog gjør det mig allerværst,  
din Broders Sværd har mit Hjærte gjæst.

In the last line, B 46 has 'fæst.' C 41 reads: 'din yngste Broder var mit Hjærte næst.' D 47: 'eders Broders Sværd i mit Hjærte haver frist.' E 42: 'din yngste Broders Sværd mit Hjærte haver kryst.'

Here, even in the poetic phraseology, we find definite connection with the Eddic poem. Originally the ballad doubtless read: *din Broders Sværd* (as in A and B) *var mit Hjærte næst* (as in C), which is certainly connected with the words in the lay *mér hefir hjórr komit hjarta it næsta*.

Helgi begs Sváfa to become *his brother's* bride (H. Hj., 41); but she answers (42) that when she became Helgi's betrothed she vowed never after his death to be the bride of a man who was not famous. In the ballad, Ribold says that he commits Guldborg to *his brother*;<sup>1</sup> but she answers: 'Never so long as I live will I give my troth to two brothers.'<sup>2</sup>

There seems to be some connection between the name of the hero of the ballad and that of the hero of the lay. In the corresponding English ballad in the Percy MS. (Child, No. 7 F), the hero is called 'the Child of *Ell* (*Elle*).'<sup>3</sup> *Hillebrand* (as the hero is sometimes called in Denmark) and *Hillemo* (the name given him in Sweden) seem to be only expanded forms of a name corresponding to *Ell*.<sup>4</sup> The name *Earl Brand* in Northumberland is evidently a variant of *Hillebrand*.<sup>4</sup> The form *Ell* or \**Helle* appears, thus, to lie at the bottom of these variations; and Grundtvig was, therefore, justified in saying: 'Whoever feels disposed may think of *Helgi* (Hundingsbani) [when he reads of the Child of *Elle*].'

<sup>1</sup> The same also in 'Earl Brand,' the English form of the ballad.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. also Dan. B 25, where Ribold says to Guldborg, 'Weep not so, my dearest!' with H. Hj., 41, where Helgi says to Sváfa, *brúðr, gráttattu!* 'Weep not, my bride!' In Dan. B 27, Guldborg says, 'for I am not very glad in heart'; cf. H. Hj., 38, where Sváfa says, *mér er harðliga harma leitat*, 'I am sorely smitten with grief.' The fact that Ribold gets his death when his beloved calls him by name, forms a sort of contrast to the situation in the lay, where Sváfa awakes Helgi to activity when she gives him his name.

<sup>3</sup> See Grundtvig, I, 340. In the changes which take place in the proper names in ballads, similarity in sound, not etymology, is oftenest the deciding factor.

<sup>4</sup> See Grundtvig, III, 854 ff.

In what follows, I shall try to show that the hero's name *Ribold* was formed from an epithet applied to Helgi Hjörvarthsson in an old Danish poem concerning him, viz. (*Roga*) *rikr baldr*, 'the powerful lord (of the Rygir).'

It seems certain, therefore, that the ballad of Ribold and Guldborg was composed in a district where the Lay of Helgi Hjörvarthsson and the so-called Second Lay of Helgi Hundingsbani, or the Danish parallels to these Eddic poems, were well known.

Where, then, was this district?

A comparison of the Danish version of this ballad with the Swedish, Norwegian, and Icelandic versions shows, I believe, that the ballad went from Denmark to Sweden, Norway, and Iceland, and that the Danish p. 287. forms are on the whole the most primitive. But the ballad was also known in England and Scotland. We have a modern Northumbrian version in 'Earl Brand';<sup>1</sup> and fragments of the same ballad are preserved in 'The Child of Ell' in Bishop Percy's MS.,<sup>2</sup> and in the Scottish 'The Douglas Tragedy.'<sup>3</sup>

We have, then, to answer the following questions: Was the ballad originally composed in Denmark or in Britain? in England or in Scotland? in Danish or in English? A feature in the ballad of Earl Brand seems to throw light on these questions. When the Earl and the King of England's daughter ride away together, they meet 'an auld carl that wears grey hair,' 'auld

<sup>1</sup> Grundtvig, *l.c.*; Child, No. 7 A.

<sup>2</sup> Percy's Folio MS., ed. Hales and Furnivall, I, 133. Child, No. 7 F.

<sup>3</sup> Child, No. 7 B C D E; 'Erlinton' (Child, No. 8) is more distantly related.



carl Hood, he's aye for ill, and never for good.' This old man informs the king that Earl Brand has ridden away with his daughter. To 'auld carl Hood' correspond 'the carlish knight, Sir John of the North Country,' in *Child of Ell*, and in the Scandinavian versions 'the rich Count (Greve),' 'Count (Greve) Paal,' 'an old man,' 'a wily man.' Other poems also know this typical personality, a malicious old man who betrays the lovers and brings about their misfortune. He appears e.g. in the Norwegian version of the Benedict-ballad, from Finmarken, as *Blinde Molvigsen*, i.e. *Blindr enn bølvisi*, 'Blind the bale-wise,' who betrays Benedict to his loved one's father.<sup>6</sup> He must have been transferred from a ballad on Hagbarth and Signy. Saxo mentions *Bolvisus luminibus captus*, i.e. *Bolviss blindr*, as King p. 288. Sigar's wicked counsellor and Hagbarth's enemy.

In the Second Helgi-lay, Helgi disguises himself as a peasant-woman in order to escape from his enemies, who pursue him. One of them, *Blindr enn bølvisi*, recognises him and wishes to betray him. Exactly the same feature is attached to Hrómund Greipsson in the saga concerning him. Here *Blindr enn illi* is King Hadding's counsellor, and reveals to him that Hrómund is alive.

There can be no doubt that in this malicious old man we have a human *alter ego* (*gjenganger*) of Odin, i.e. of Odin conceived as a devil. Odin appears as an old man (*karl*) with a grey beard, and is, therefore, called *Hárbarðr* (Hoary-beard). In 'Earl Brand' he is called *Hood*, 'a head-covering, hat.' Similarly, in the first chapter of the *Hálfssaga*, Odin appears among men

<sup>1</sup> See Grundtvig, III, 795 f.

under the name *Hotttr*, 'hat.' He is called elsewhere *Síðhotttr*, 'slouch hat'; and his characteristic mark is a slouch hat.<sup>1</sup> In the Second Helgi-lay (34) Dag says, after Helgi is killed: 'Odin alone is to blame for all this misfortune; for he awoke strife among kinsmen.'

But if 'auld carl Hood' in 'Earl Brand' is a human *alter ego* of Odin, then the English ballad must be older than the Danish, which has not preserved this name. The English ballad, in which a human *alter ego* of Odin appears, must have arisen early in the Middle Ages, since it has preserved the memory of the heathen god. But such a memory can hardly have been retained by the English, who were so early christianised, and who have no heathen poem in which Woden plays a part.<sup>2</sup> His memory must have kept itself alive among the Scandinavians.

The ballad under discussion (Earl Brand or Ribold) must, therefore, have been composed in the early Christian Middle Ages in a Scandinavian language in Britain, most likely in Northern England. Afterwards it was, on the one hand, translated into English, and on the other, it was carried over in Danish form from England to Denmark.<sup>3</sup>

The rôle of Odin in the ballad appears to agree with Old Norse, but not with Danish conceptions of that

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Child, *Ballads*, 1, 94 f; F. York Powell, *C. P. B.*, 1, 506.

<sup>2</sup> Binz (in Sievers, *Beit.*, xx, 222 f) tries, by means of an examination of certain place-names, to make it probable that the Anglo-Saxons knew a mythical person *Hôd*. But there is nothing to indicate that their conception of this person was the same as that of 'auld carl Hood' in the ballad.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. F. York Powell in *C. P. B.*, 1, 504 ff.

god.<sup>1</sup> This fact argues in favour of the view that it was the work of an Old Norse poet which influenced p. 289. the ballad that was composed by a Danish poet in England.

The name *Ribold*, *Rigebold* (drawn, as I believe, from *Roga ríkr baldr* in the old lay), also supports the hypothesis that the ballad was composed in England; for names in *-bald* were used in England, but not in Denmark.

Still another feature argues for the view that the ballad as sung in Denmark was carried over to that country from England. Ribold says to Guldborg in their first conversation: 'I will take thee to the isle where thou shalt live and never die. I will take thee to the land where thou shalt not know sorrow—to a land where grows no other grass than leeks, where sing no other birds than cuckoos, where runs no other liquid than wine.'

This opening, in which a man promises to take a maiden to an earthly paradise,<sup>2</sup> is common to several ballads. It occurs, for example, in the ballad of 'The Murderer of Women' (*Kvindemorderen*, Grundtvig, No. 183). Grundtvig is doubtless right in his remark

<sup>1</sup> Olrik, *Saxses Oldhist.*, 1, 31.

<sup>2</sup> It is not to be found in the extant forms of the English ballad 'Earl Brand'; but, as Professor Child points out (*Ballads*, 1, 90, note), there are traces of it in the following opening verses of another ballad, 'Leesome Brand' (Child, No. 15):

My boy was scarcely ten years auld,  
When he went to an unco land,  
Where wind never blew, nor cocks ever crew,  
Ohon for my son, Leesome Brand!

This ballad has also other points of contact with 'Earl Brand.'

(IV, 28), that these verses belong originally to a ballad in which a supernatural being woos the daughter of a mortal.

p. 290. The description of this marvellous land certainly originated in Celtic (especially Irish) stories of the 'Land of Youth,' the 'Land of the Living,' an island far out in the sea to the west—the finest land under the sun, where there is abundance of silver, gold, and precious stones, of honey and wine. There the trees bear fruit, flowers bloom, and green foliage abounds the whole year through. The inhabitants of that land never grow old. In Irish poems we read that men who belong to that wonderful place succeed in luring mortal women thither by their description of its beauty.<sup>1</sup>

The use of this motive in the Ribold-ballad may possibly be connected with the fact that in the Lay of Helgi Hjörvarthsson the hero's father, or his faithful man, is said to dwell *at Glasislundi*, 'by the tree with the golden foliage' (*i.e.* in the earthly paradise); and Helgi is said to rule over *Röðulsvellir*, 'the radiant plains.'

In what precedes I have tried, then, to show: (1) that the man who composed the ballad of which 'Earl Brand' and 'Ribold and Guldborg' are different forms, knew the Eddic Lay of Helgi Hjörvarthsson (though, as appears from a single expression employed, in an older form than that now extant), and the Second Lay of Helgi Hundingsbani; and (2) that this ballad was composed by a Dane in Northern England in the early Middle Ages (in the thirteenth century?).

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Zimmer, *Kelt. Beiträge*, II, 279; Alfred Nutt, *The Happy Other-world*.

If I am right in these conclusions, it follows that the Lay of Helgi Hjör. and H. Hund., II, were known in the Middle Ages (about 1200, or in the thirteenth century?) among the Scandinavians in Northern England.

The ballad of Ribold and Guldborg, however, also shows resemblance to other poems known in England. Both Grundtvig and Child have observed<sup>1</sup> its resemblance to the story of Walter and Hildegund. This p. 291. seems to me unquestionable. But I would go further. In my opinion, the Ribold-ballad, in which the mystical motive of the hero's being called by his name is made the cause of the tragic conclusion, is, so far as its saga-material is concerned, a combination of two different poems: (1) a ballad which contained a working-over of the O.N. lay that corresponded to the so-called Second Helgi-lay and to the Lay of Helgi Hjörvarthsson; and (2) a ballad which was a working-over of an old lay on Walter and Hildegund. I believe, further, that it can be shown that some of the different forms of the Ribold-ballad have preserved more of the Walter-story than others.

For the sources of our knowledge of the story of Walter and Hildegund I may refer to Heinzel's excellent dissertation, *Über die Walthersage* (Vienna, 1888). The oldest of these sources are (1) fragments of an A.S. poem in a MS. of the ninth century, and (2) a poem composed in Latin in the South of Germany in the tenth century, which is preserved in a redaction of the eleventh century. Of the other sources I shall mention only that in the *Þiðrekssaga*, which is based on Low-German material.

<sup>1</sup> See Grundtvig, *Danm. gl. Folkev.*, II, 340; Child, *Ballads*, I, 94, 106 f.



Let us now compare the Ribold-ballad with the Walter-story. (1) Ribold is a king's son (Dan. A 1, B 1). He serves many years at the court of a foreign king (Dan.  $\phi$ ; Landstad, No. 33), where he converses in secret with Guldborg. This agrees with the situation in the story of Walter, who is a warrior in Etzel's service, and after a warlike expedition talks alone with Hildegund. (2) Walter's parents decide in his childhood that he shall marry Hildegund. The refrain in the Swedish form of the ballad points to a similar relation between the knight and the maiden: 'For that one to  
 p. 292, whom he has pledged himself in his youth'; in Norwegian (in Landstad, 33) thus: 'Thou art that one, thou art that one who was betrothed to me in my youth.' (3) In the ballad the knight asks the maiden if she will accompany him: 'To the land of my father I will take thee.'<sup>1</sup> Similarly, Walter says to Hildegund that he will gladly flee to his native land; but that he will not leave her behind. (4) Ribold tells Guldborg to collect her gold in a box. Walter tells Hildegund to fill two boxes with gold and jewels, and take them with her (or, in the *þiðrekssaga*, to take with her as much gold as she can bear with one arm). (5) In both the ballad and the Walter-story the hero and the maiden ride away on one horse. In the ballad he lifts her up on the horse; in the Latin *Waltharius* he gives her the reins. (6) In the ballad they leave the court secretly while the people sleep and the dog lies in a trance.<sup>2</sup> Walter and Hildegund ride away while all the Huns sleep

<sup>1</sup> Danish B 2, E 2. Yet possibly the original reading was 'Til et feire Land' (*i.e.* to a fairer land), instead of 'Til mit fædrene Land'; cf. D 2.

<sup>2</sup> Landstad, No. 33.



after a carousal in which Walter and Hildegund have managed to make them all drunk. (7) When Walter and Hildegund are riding into the land beyond the Rhine, they come to a difficult pass which lies between two cliffs, and is concealed by green foliage, bushes, and high grass. 'Let us rest here,' said Walter. He had been forced to go too long without sweet sleep. He laid aside his armour and rested his tired head in the maiden's lap. We have practically the same situation in the ballad: 'When they came into the green grove, Ribold desired to rest there.<sup>1</sup> They gathered twigs and leaves, from which they made themselves a bed.<sup>2</sup> So he laid his head in Guldborg's lap; he slept a sleep, and found it sweet.'<sup>3</sup> Both in the Walter-story and in the ballad, the maiden wakes the hero and says that the enemies are near. (8) In the *Waltharius*, a ferryman whom the fugitives have met gives information about them to Guntheri, who is sitting at meat. The king bids his men put on their armour and pursue them. In the ballad a man who has met the fugitives reveals their flight to the king, who is sitting with his men in the hall and drinking. The king bids his men rise up and array themselves in steel.<sup>4</sup> (9) When their enemies draw near, the knight says to the maiden in the ballad: 'Be not so anxious, dearest!' (Dan. B, 29). Walter bids Hildegund not to be afraid. Before the last fight he bids her take the reins and drive the horse with the treasure

<sup>1</sup> Danish D 31; *Þ* 6; *Æ* 10.

<sup>2</sup> Landstad, No. 34, v. 20.

<sup>3</sup> Danish *Æ* 11; *Þ* 7.

<sup>4</sup> Landstad, No. 34; No. 33; Danish D, etc.

away into the forest. Ribold says to Guldborg: 'Thou shalt hold my horse by the bridle. Thou shalt hold my horse, up under the oak, while I go into the sharp play' (B 34). (10) In *Waltharius*, the hero says before the last fight: 'I will choose me a place by the mountain's steep side.' In 'Erlinton' we read:

He set his back unto an aik,  
He set his feet against a stane.

p. 294. When their enemies come, Walter seizes his armour and puts it on. The knight of the ballad clothes himself in his armour (Dan. C 29). (11) In both poems the hero fights against odds, his opponents being numerous. (12) In both the enemies do not all come against him at once. In 'Earl Brand' they come one at a time, until he has slain fourteen men. Then the fifteenth attacks him from behind. According to the Danish versions, he kills the maiden's father and eleven of her brothers. Walter slays twelve men in single combat. (13) In the Norwegian ballad, Guldborg tries to bind up the wounds of the knight. In 'The Douglas Tragedy,' Margaret binds up those of her father. In *Waltharius*, Hildegund binds up the wounds of those who have suffered in the last fight.

I have shown (p. 311, above) that several forms of the hero's name in the ballad seem to point to *Helgi*. Other forms of his name seem to point to an O.N. \**Valdarr*, which would correspond to the name of Hildegund's lover, A.S. *Waldere*, O.H.G. *Waltari*. He is called in Swedish C *Kung Vallemo*, in Danish *φ* (from Vendsyssel) *Kong Valdemor*<sup>1</sup> (where *Kung*

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the change of *Valdarr* in Guthr., 11, 19, to *Valdamarr* in the Völs. saga.

possibly arose from *ung*). By the influence of *Rikeball*, *Ribold*, *v* was changed into *b* in *Boldrik* (Dan. *Æ*), *herr Ballder* or *Ballerman* (Swed. *G*).<sup>1</sup>

The first part of the name *Hilde-gund* seems to be preserved in *Hile-bjǫr* in a Norwegian form of the ballad from Fyresdal in Telemarken,<sup>2</sup> and in *Ölle-ber* in Landstad, No. 34.

The connection between the Ribold-ballad and the Walter-story supports the theory that the ballad was composed in England; for the fragments of the A.S. p. 295. epic poem *Waldere*<sup>3</sup> show that the Walter-story was known there. By this I do not mean that this particular poem is the definite source which we may presuppose for the ballad. We know too little of the epic poem to be able to make that assertion. But the ballad gives us, at any rate, important evidence as to the form in which the Waldere-story was known in England.

The Scandinavian ballad of *Herr Hjelm* (as Professor Moltke Moe has pointed out) is also connected with the Second Lay of Helgi Hundingsbani.

The version of this ballad which, on the whole, is most complete is in Swedish, No. 21, in the collection of Arwidsson (from that of Verelius).

Hielmer (Hielmen, Hielm) serves several years at the king's court, and wins the love of the king's daughter. Her father, getting wind of this, has Hielmer brought to him, and says that it shall cost him his heart's blood

<sup>1</sup> Somewhat differently in Grundtvig, *Danm. gl. Folkev.*, II, 340.

<sup>2</sup> Grundtvig, *id.*, III, 854.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Binz, in Sievers, *Beit.*, XX, 217 ff.

if he is found speaking in private with the princess. Then Hielmer cuts off the king's right hand and his head. He does not follow the advice of his followers and flee from the land, but rides against the king's seven sons who are in the rose-garden. When they refuse to accept recompense from him, he fights with them and kills six. Unfortunately he spares the seventh, and by him he is treacherously killed. The murderer rides to his sister's dwelling with Hielmer's head on his spear, and tells her that he has killed her betrothed. She invites him into her bower and gives him to drink; but when he raises the vessel to his lips, she stabs him to the heart. Then, full of joy, she exclaims: 'Well shall I bury my betrothed.'

Inferior Swedish versions are printed in Geijer and Afzelius (2nd ed., No. 47, 1 and 2). In 47, 2, Hjalmar has children with the little Kirstin. The youngest brother swears fidelity to Hjalmar.

The Hjelmer-ballad is also known in Denmark. A version from southern Zealand is to be found in Svend p. 296. Grundtvig's *Gamle Danske Minder*, III, 81 ff. Here the maiden gives Herr Hjælm a splendid burial, and builds a church over his grave. She herself dies of grief.<sup>1</sup>

In a Norwegian version taken down in Fyresdal in Upper Telemarken, the youngest brother, 'Graasvennen,' who is spared, promises to be a faithful comrade of the hero; but he deceives him.

This ballad has the following motives in common

<sup>1</sup> There is a version from Jutland in E. T. Kristensen, 100 *gamle jyske Folkeviser* (1889), No. 66. The Danish forms of the ballad, which have given up the tragic ending (in Peder Syv, IV, No. 82, and in other places) do not concern us here.

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with the Lay of Helgi's Death. The hero wins his loved-one without her father's consent, and has children by her. The hero is attacked by his wife's father and brothers, all of whom he kills, with the exception of one brother, whom he spares. This brother swears fidelity to the hero, but later murders him treacherously. He comes to his sister's dwelling, and announces what he has done. In the ballad, she then kills her brother; in the lay, she curses him. In both, she dies of grief.

I conjecture that this ballad, like that of Ribold, spread from Denmark to Norway and Sweden, and that it came to Denmark from England, where it had been composed in imitation of some older work by a Danish poet.

The Hjelmmer-ballad in its essentials is independent of the Ribold-ballad; but the two seem to have arisen in about the same surroundings, and to have had from early times points of contact with each other. In one respect the two ballads agree as opposed to the old poem: in several versions Hjelmmer kills six of the brothers of his loved-one.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Certain slight resemblances in details between the Hjelmmer-ballad and forms of the English ballad which corresponds to that on Ribold, are perhaps not accidental. In Hjelmmer (Arwidsson, v. 7) the king says: 'That shall cost [thee] thy heart's blood'; cf. Eng. F 2: 'My father says that he will not eat or drink before he has slain the Child of Ell, "and have seene his harts blood."' In the English form the father addresses the hero angrily as in the Hjelmmer-ballad. Hjelmmer is killed (Arw., 25) by the murderer coming at him from behind, as in the English A 25. The version of the Hjelmmer-ballad given by Grundtvig, like 'The Douglas Tragedy,' represents flowers as growing up and intertwining over the lovers' grave; but that is hardly an original agreement. These resemblances might be p. 297. taken to support the theory that the Hjelmmer-ballad also arose first among Danes in England. It does not seem to have been influenced by the



## XXIII

CONCLUDING REMARKS ON THE LAY OF HELGI  
HJØRVARTHSSON.

THAT part of the Lay of Helgi Hjörvarthsson which tells of Hrímgærth was certainly at first a separate poem. It seems without question to have been composed later than the rest of the lay and by another skald. The verses in the Hrímgærth-lay are the only ones which represent Sváva as a supernatural woman who rides before a company of maidens through the air and over the sea, and who saves Helgi's ships in the storm. This lay was, it appears, composed by the same poet as the First Lay of Helgi Hundingsbani, and seems most likely to have been completed after p. 298. the First Lay, which dates from ca. 1025. The poet was born in the western part of Norway, but lived in England and Ireland, probably at the royal court in Dublin, where he was influenced by intercourse with Irish learned men and story-tellers. Into the story of Helgi and his father Hjörvarth, composed earlier by another skald, this Norwegian poet inserted the Hrímgærth-lay which he had himself composed. The sections

Walter-story. The feature that Hjelmer, according to the opening of the ballad, serves at the court of a foreign king is so common that no one would venture to explain it by a reference to the Walter-story. The hero was possibly called *Hjelmer* because Helgi in H. H., 11, 7 and 14 is named *hilmir*, i.e. the king (who shelters his men).



of the Lay of Helgi Hjor. which contain strophes in the metre *fornyrðislag* were, therefore, known by the Norse poet in Britain at the beginning of the eleventh century; and it looks as if we could trace the influence of these verses in the First Helgi-Lay.<sup>1</sup>

With the exception of the Hrímgærth part, the Lay of Helgi Hjor. is throughout consistent in treatment, the mode of presentation in all the other sections being the same as that with which we have already become familiar from the Lay of Helgi Hund's Death: the purely narrative parts are in prose, while the speeches of the leading personages which determine the action and reveal the nature of the characters are in verse, in the metre *fornyrðislag*; only one half-strophe (36) is narrative.

Here also, then, the prose passages are to be regarded as an original and necessary part of the work, though originally of course they had not exactly that form and order in which they are preserved in the extant MS. On the contrary, the editors have shown that both in the story of Hjorvarth and Sigrlinn and in that of Helgi and Hethin, there is a confusion in the prose which cannot be ascribed to the poet who first gave the work its form.

There is apparently every reason to believe that it is p. 299. to the author of the story of Hjorvarth and Sigrlinn that

<sup>1</sup> The poetic designation of the sword which Helgi, son of Sigmund, gets at his birth, viz. *blóðorm búinn*, H. H., 1, 8, appears to have been suggested by the description of the serpent-sword which Helgi Hjorvarthsson gets at his birth, H. Hj., 8-9. With *itrborinn*, H. H., 1, 9, cf. H. Hj., 37; with *fátt hygg ek þör sjásk*, H. Hj., 12, cf. *sá sésk fylkir fátt at lifi*, H. Hj., 11; with *vinna grand*, H. Hj., 13, cf. *grand um vinna*, H. Hj., 38.

we must ascribe the account of Helgi's first meeting with Sváfa, and of his expedition of revenge against Hróthmar, together with that of Helgi's relations with Hethin, and the Lay of Helgi's Death.<sup>1</sup> In what follows, then, I shall treat all the matter regarding Hjørvarth and his son Helgi, with the exception of the Hrímgærth-lay, as one single work.

I have shown (pp. 272 ff, 290 ff, 317 above) that this work was composed in Britain. I shall now call attention to certain details which point in the same direction, even though they prove nothing, since the expressions under discussion were also familiar at a later period in Iceland.

Of the sword which Helgi receives from Sváfa, he says (st. 9):

*liggr með eggju  
ormr dreyrfáðr,  
en á valbøstu  
verpr naðr hala.*

'A blood-stained serpent lies along the edge, and on the *valbøst* (some part of the sword, but just what is uncertain) the snake casts its tail.'

In Icelandic skaldic poetry it was very common to call a sword battle-serpent or battle-snake, wound-snake, shield-snake, etc. *Naðr*, 'the snake,' is said to have been the name of Egil Skallagrímsson's sword. It was of course natural to imagine the sword, which is quickly drawn from the sheath, as a viper which leaves its hole and stings. This idea even gave rise to

<sup>1</sup> This is also F. Jónsson's opinion; see *Litt. Hist.*, 1, 248.

fabulous tales, as *e.g.* when we read in *Kormakssaga*, chap. 9, of a sword from whose hilts there crept out a young serpent. It is connected with the figuring of a snake on the sword, and should be compared with statements in Anglo-Saxon, Cymric, and Irish literature.

In *Béow.*, 1698, a sword is called *wyrmfðh*, 'adorned with the picture of a serpent.' In the Cymric story *Rhonabwy's Dream*,<sup>1</sup> we read of Arthur's sword: 'The p. 300. picture of two snakes was on the sword in gold. And when the sword was drawn out of its sheath, it looked as if two flames of fire broke out of the jaws of the snakes.' In the Irish tale of the Destruction of Troy in the Book of Leinster (1040), it is said of Paris: 'a new snake-sword (*claideb nua natharda*) was in his hand.' In the Irish tale *De Chophur in dá muccida*,<sup>2</sup> which belongs to the old North Irish epic cycle, mention is made of 'a sword which has a golden handle and snake-shapes of gold and carbuncle.'<sup>3</sup> Other Irish tales contain similar descriptions.

In H. Hj., 35, occurs the word *fljóð*, neut. 'woman'; but this is not the oldest lay in which it is used. It is to be found in many Eddic poems of which some, *e.g.* *Rígsþula*, may safely be assigned to an earlier date. I have elsewhere<sup>4</sup> tried to show that this word is formed after the English names of women in *-fled* or *-flæd*, and that the author of *Rígsþula* adduced *Fljóð* as the

<sup>1</sup> Lady Charlotte Guest, *Mabinogion*, London, 1877, p. 306.

<sup>2</sup> In a MS. written in 1419.

<sup>3</sup> Stokes and Windisch, *Irische Texte*, III, 238; cf. 109 and 252.

<sup>4</sup> In my *Bidrag til den ældste Skaldedigtninges Historie*, p. 30. *-fled* probably had a long or half-long *e*.

representative of English-born women, who usually bore names in *-fled*.

This theory is strengthened by the name of the woman *Sinrjðð* in the prose bit before the Lay of Helgi Hjör.; for *Sinrjðð* seems to be a reconstruction of an A.S. form \**Sinred* (with long or half-long *e*). Additional support is found in the Icelandic name *Sigrfljðð*, gen. *Sigrfljððar*. The earliest use of this name I have noted is in the *Fóstbræðrasaga*, p. 13, where it is given to a woman who lived in the extreme north-western part of Iceland in the eleventh century. In the same district the name is not uncommon, even at the present day; but it is hard to say whether the modern use is due to the influence of the saga, or whether it is  
p. 301. preserved from ancient times. The only example of *fljðð* in prose occurs in *Sigrfljðð*, and that name is evidently a reconstruction of the A.S. name *Sigefled* (*Sifled*, *Syfflæd*, *Sygfled*).

It seems probable that the Scandinavians had reconstructed English names in *-fled* into names in *-fljðð*, before the author of *Rígsþula* used *Fljðð* in his poem as a designation for 'woman.'

In the Lay of Helgi Hjör. we observe a series of agreements with the story of Helgi Hund., as treated in various poems, some of which seem to me to show that the latter was the model. We have also, I believe, evidence that that particular form of the Lay of Helgi Hjör. which is preserved in the Edda, is later than the extant Lay of Helgi Hund.'s Death; and that this latter lay was known by the author of the Lay of Helgi Hjör.

The following agreements in poetic expressions may be pointed out :<sup>1</sup>—

Both Hjǫrvarth and his son Helgi are called *buðlungr*.<sup>2</sup> This appellation seems to have been previously used of Helgi, son of Sigmund; for its application to him may be explained: the mother of Wolfdietrich, Helgi Hund's foreign prototype (in German A) was *Botelung's* sister. Moreover, the fact that the author of the Lay of Helgi Hjǫr. knew the Lay on the Death of Helgi Hund., is shown by the almost word-for-word agreement in the expressions used in the poems when the fall of the hero is announced.<sup>3</sup> p. 302.

Helgi Hjǫr. falls 'at Wolfstone' (*at Frekasteini*, H. Hj., 39). This is also the name of the battlefield where Helgi Hund. is victorious.<sup>4</sup> Its use in the connection with Helgi Hund. seems to have been the earlier; for Helgi Hund. was intimately associated with wolves from his birth: he was the friend of wolves.

The Lay of Helgi Hjǫr. agrees in general with the various Lays of Helgi Hund. in that it too contains several names of places, which exist only in the land of poetic fancy, not in the real world. Just as Sigrún is from *Sefajjellum*, 'mountains of passion,' so Sigrlinn,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *fólks óðdviti*, H. Hj., 10, and H. H., 11, 12. Of less special resemblances in poetic expressions between H. Hj. and other Eddic poems, we may give the following examples: *harðan hug* . . . *gjaldir*, H. Hj., 6, and *galzt* (MS. *galzt*) *harðan hug*, Fáfn., 19; *if er mér á því*, *at ek aþtr koma*, H. Hj., 3, and *if er mér á*, *at ek væra enn kominn*, Háv., 108.

<sup>2</sup> H. Hj., 2, 3, 25, 39, 40, 43.

<sup>3</sup> *Féll hér í morgun* . . . *buðlungr sá er var bestr und sólu*, H. Hj., 39; *þers er buðlungr var bestr und sólu*, H. Hj., 43; *féll í morgun* . . . *buðlungr sá er var bestr í heimi*, H. H., 11, 30.

<sup>4</sup> H. H., 11, 21, 26; I, 44, 53.



before she becomes Hjørvarth's bride, is *í munar heimi* (or *Munarheimi*), H. Hj., 1, 'in the home (dwelling-place) of longing (or love)'; and Sváfa likewise is *í munar heimi* when Helgi gives her rings, H. Hj., 42. Atli, Hjørvarth's faithful follower, dwells at *Glasislundi*, H. Hj., 1, 'by the tree with the golden foliage,' which, as I have tried to show (above, p. 306 f), is a reconstruction of a foreign place-name. Helgi's hereditary kingdom is called *á Røðulsvøllum*, H. Hj., 6, 'the radiant plains,' with which we may compare *Røðulsfjalla*, H. Hj., 43. Here too we may have a reconstruction.

Both heroes of the name Helgi are brought into connection with a man called Sigar (H. Hj., 36; H. H., II, 4). In this respect also the Lay of Helgi Hund. appears the more original, for there Sigar is named as a king's son, just as elsewhere he is designated as a king, and there is a hint of hostile relations between him and Helgi. In the Lay of Helgi Hjør., on the contrary, Sigar is Helgi's messenger.

p. 303. The relations between Sváfa and Helgi Hjør. are analogous to those between Sigrún and Helgi Hund. In both poems there is a love-compact between a hero who falls in his youth, and a woman who from the outset watches over and follows him in his warrior life. Sigrún stands near the hero, whose beloved she becomes, in his first fight; and in their conversation she calls him by name, when he wishes to conceal who he is (H. H., II, 5-13). Sváfa gives her favourite a name and a wonderful sword with which to perform warlike deeds (H. Hj., 6-11).<sup>1</sup> A later redaction has

<sup>1</sup> Rosenberg (*Nordboernes Aandsliv*, I, 258 f, 284) is wrong in thinking that the same poet composed the Hrímgæth-lay and the other sections



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brought Sváfa and Sigrún still nearer each other by regarding both as valkyries, or women endowed with supernatural powers.

Helgi Hjorvarthsson is slain by the son of the warrior he has killed. His beloved Sváfa comes to him at his hour of death; and her grief at his death is described in the poem. This was, perhaps, influenced by the account of Helgi Hund's Death. Helgi Hund. is slain by Dag, whose father he has killed, and as a dead man he visits his grave-mound, where the living Sigrún rests in his bosom a single night, after which they separate, and she dies of grief. Both heroes are described as noble and mild. Both poems agree, as p. 304. opposed to the Hrímgærth-lay and to the First Helgi-lay, in their poetic form, and also in representing the woman who follows the hero as a truly human, loving woman, who sorrows over her husband's death. They both have close connections with Danish works. Still the Sváfa-lay is but, as it were, a subdued echo of the story of the death of Sigrún and Helgi, which surges with passion and grief.

of the Lay of Helgi Hjor. He thinks that this poet has distinguished between a divine valkyrie, who gives Helgi a name and a sword, and Helgi's loved-one Sváfa. In opposition to this theory, it may be pointed out that the appellation *valkyrja* occurs only in the prose passages. Moreover, it is only the younger strophes forming the Hrímgærth-lay which describe a supernatural, half-divine woman; such a description is not found in the older strophes which tell of the woman who gives Helgi a name and a sword. The identity of Sváfa and the woman, who gives Helgi a name, seems to me to be suggested in the hero's words to the woman who has given him a name: 'I will not accept it unless I have (get, win) thee' (H. Hj., 7). That Sváfa is not considered as unwarlike, we see from her words when she learns that Helgi is near death: 'I will bring destruction on the man whose sword has pierced him' (H. Hj., 38).

Nor does the Death of Helgi Hjör. present us with the imaginative, high-soaring pictures which the *Hrímgerth-lay* has in common with the *Lay on the Birth of Helgi Hund*. Yet, in contrast to *Hrímgerth*, *Sváfa* is described, like *Sigrún* in the *First Lay*, as a supernatural woman, in whose portrayal we have features from Irish battle-goddesses and supernatural women in classical stories.

But in the *Death of Helgi Hjör.*, more uniformly than in the *First Helgi-lay*, we find pure and sustained lines, with natural feeling and graphic characterisation. Especially is it the description of Helgi's noble high-mindedness in the presence of his penitent brother *Hethin* which gives the poem its characteristic quality.

The stories both of the *First* and of the *Second Helgi* show the influence of Frankish tales. The *Wolfig Helgi Hund* may be said to have his foreign prototype in *Wolf-Theodoric*, the saga-hero who corresponds to the historical East-Gothic *Theoderik* (born ca. 455, died 526) in the latter's youth. On the contrary, the *Helgi* whom *Sváfa* loves, and whose father *Hjörvarth* wins his bride by means of a faithful messenger, corresponds to the Frankish *Theuderik* (born before 492, died 533 or 534), the husband of *Suavegotta* and son of *Chlodovech*, who wins his bride through his wise messenger. But in South-Germanic poems *Huge-Dietrich*, the poetic representative of the Frankish *Theuderik*, is made *Wolfdietrich's* father.

This fact, that the two *Theodorics* were thus even in West-Germanic stories brought into connection with each other, the Frankish being regarded as the older, the East-Gothic as the younger, was, as I believe, one

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of the reasons why in the Old Norse lay Helgi Hjor. was represented as born again in Helgi Hund.

This statement is not made in the strophes, but only in the prose passages. After the conclusion of the Lay of Helgi Hjor. we read: 'It is said that Helgi and Svafa were born again.' In the beginning of the prose passage On the Volsungs: 'King Sigmund, the son of Volsung, was married to Borghild of Brálund. They called their son Helgi, and gave him this name after Helgi Hjorvarthsson.' Before H. H., II, 5: 'Hogni's daughter was Sigrún. She was a valkyrie, and rode through the air and over the sea. She was the reborn Svafa.' Finally, after the account of Helgi's Death: 'It was believed in olden days (*í forneskju*) that people were born again; but that is now called old women's superstition. It is said that Helgi and Sigrún were born again. He was then called Helgi *Haddingjaskati*, and she Kára, daughter of Halfdan.'

Gustav Storm has collected the places in Icelandic documents where belief in rebirth is mentioned.<sup>1</sup> He has shown that the naming of a child after dead relatives is connected with the belief that the relative after whom he is named is born again in him who is thus called after the departed.<sup>2</sup>

I would point out here that nowhere in Germanic heroic stories, except in Old Norse, do we find the idea that certain of the characters in the story are born again, as if that were a favour to them, the reborn

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Uhland, *Schriften*, VIII, 136 f.

<sup>2</sup> *Arkiv f. nord. Filol.*, IX, 199-222. I may add that I have heard in the western part of Telemarken *reise upp atte* (raise up again) used with reference to the naming of a child after a dead person.

person not being of necessity of the same race as he in whom he reappears (for no connection in race between the three Helgis is suggested), nor bearing of necessity the same name as he in whom he is reborn, though this is doubtless usually the case (for Sváva, Sigrún, and Kára have different names).

p. 306. We may observe, however, that this same belief also occurs in *Irish* heroic stories. Finn was born again as Mongán, and as Mongán remembered his first life. Tuan, son of Carell, had lived previously as Tuan, son of Starn.<sup>1</sup> May we not, therefore, believe that the Norse conception was influenced in the west by Irish beliefs?

We have seen that Helgi Hund. has his foreign prototype in Wolf-Theodoric, the legendary hero corresponding to the East-Gothic Theodorik before the latter became King of Italy; while Helgi Hjör. partly corresponds to the Frankish Theoderik. We find a departure from this relation in the fact that the story of Wolf-Theodoric's meeting with the mermaid is not transferred to Helgi Hund. but to Helgi Hjör. in what seems to be one of the latest sections of the story about the latter. This variation is doubtless to be explained by the supposition that the name of *Atlas*, who in the Latin tale kills Scylla's father, reminded the poet of *Atli*, who had previously been brought into connection with Helgi's father Hjörvarth.

At the same time that the Scandinavian poets in England heard the Frankish stories of the two Theodorics, they also heard the stories of Sigmund and his

<sup>1</sup> See D'Arbois de Jubainville, *Le Cycle Mythol.*, p. 244 ff; Stokes and Windisch, *Irish Texts*, III, 231.

son Sigfried (Sefert), who, as I shall try to show in another investigation, had even in West-Germanic tradition been brought into connection with the stories of Wolf-Theodoric. This gave occasion for the Vøl-sung-story to exercise influence first on the Lay of Helgi Hund., and also on that of Helgi Hjör. Here also it is clear that the former lay in its earliest developed form is older than the latter, even if the two poems must be regarded as having arisen in practically the same environment.

We find a series of points of contact between the stories of the Vølsungs and that of Helgi Hjör.<sup>3</sup> Just as Helgi Hund. was represented as the son of Sigurth's (Siegfried's, Sefert's) father Sigmund, so the name *Sigrliinn*, which is identical with *Sigelint*, the German name of Siegfried's mother, was transferred to Helgi Hjör's mother. Both the mother of Helgi Hjör. and the mother of Sigurth Fáfnisbani were wooed by two kings at the same time. The fathers of the mothers of both Helgi and Sigurth were killed by the rejected suitor; and the first warlike deed of Helgi, as of Sigurth, was to avenge his grandfather.

Evidently, however, all the agreements are not to be explained as due to the influence of the story of the Vølsungs on that of Helgi Hjör.; there were doubtless older agreements between the two stories which helped to bring them into connection with each other, as appears from the relations they bear to the stories of Attila and Chlodovech.

The name *Eyrimi*<sup>1</sup> is common to the Sigurth-story

<sup>1</sup> The question as to the origin of this name cannot well be discussed except in connection with Sigurth.



and to the Helgi-story: the father of Sváva and the father of Hjörðís, Sigurth's mother, are both so called. The young Helgi Hjör. receives from Sváva a sword with which to do heroic deeds. The young Sigmund receives a sword from Odin, and from its fragments is forged the sword Gram for Sigurth. Helgi goes to his father King Hjörvarth, Sigurth to King Hjalprek, at whose court he has been brought up, to get ships and followers for his expedition of revenge. Sváva comes to the dying Helgi on the battlefield, just as Hjörðís comes to the dying Sigmund. Both stories give the dying hero's conversation with the faithful woman he loved.<sup>1</sup>

In still another respect we may observe that the Lay of Helgi Hjör. developed with the Lay of Helgi Hund. as a model. I have pointed out in what precedes that the story of Sigrún was influenced by that of the Hjathnings. Similarly, the story of Helgi Hjör.'s relations to his brother Hethin certainly arose under the influence of the same narrative, especially in the form in which it is recounted in *Serla þáttr*.<sup>2</sup>

In both stories a king's son, Hethin, appears. Hithinus, who carries off Hilda, has his home, according to Saxo, in Norway. The Norwegian champion Hethin the slender, in the Brávalla-lay, is probably the same saga-hero.<sup>3</sup> The Hethin of the Helgi-story also dwells in Norway. When the story begins, both are spending the winter peacefully at home. Both,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Müllenhoff, *Ztsch. f. d. Alt.*, xxiii, 142; Sijmons, in Paul-Braune, *Beit.*, iv, 187 f.

<sup>2</sup> *Flat.*, i, 275-283; *Fornald. ss.*, i, 391-407. This I have already pointed out in my *Studien* (1st Series), pp. 174 f.

<sup>3</sup> A. Olrik, *Saksnes Oldhist.*, i, 192-195.



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when alone out in a forest, meet a superhuman demonic woman, who converses with the king's son. In both stories this woman confuses the young man's mind to such an extent that, after he has drunk from a beaker, he offends another king to whom he is bound by ties of dutiful affection. He carries off, or wishes to carry off, from this king a young woman who is described as a battle-maiden (though of Sváfa this is only partly true). Hild's home, according to Saxo, is in Jutland, and, according to *Sprla þátttr*, in Denmark. There is much which indicates that Sváfa also was considered by the author of the Lay of Helgi Hjqr. as the daughter of a Jutish king. In the Helgi-story, the king against whom Hethin offends is his own brother, whose loved-one he would make his own; in the story of the Hjathnings, it is Hethin's foster-brother whose daughter he carries off. In both stories, Hethin sets out repentant for foreign lands. In both he meets in a foreign land—though under different circumstances—the king against whom he has offended, and confesses to him his sorrow for his offence in words which show mutual relationship in the two poems.<sup>1</sup> At the time when this conversation takes place, Helgi is under p. 309.

<sup>1</sup> In *Sprla þátttr* (*Flat.*, i, 281) Hethin says: *þat er þer at segia, fost-brodir, at mig hefir hent sua mikit slys at þat ma einge beta nema þu.* According to this, the defective text in Helgi Hjqr., 32, *Mic hefir myclo glopr meiri sóttan*, may be corrected to:

*Mik hefir myklu  
meiri sóttan  
glæpr [en, bróðir!  
beta megak].*

The words of Hethin from the Hjathning-story given above were doubtless at one time in verse form.

agreement to fight with another king, and in this combat he afterwards loses his life. In the story of the Hjathnings, the conversation between Hethin and his foster-brother ends with a challenge, and in the ensuing fight both fall.

In the Helgi-story, Sváva comes to the battlefield where she finds Helgi wounded to death, with Hethin by his side. In the Hjathning-story, Hild comes to the battlefield where Högni and Hethin lie dead.

I believe, therefore, that the confusion of Hethin's mind by a demonic woman, which leads him to desire his brother's loved-one, was taken from the Hjathning-story. But in the Lay of Helgi Hjör., as in that of Helgi Hund., what is borrowed from the story of the Hjathnings is conceived and reproduced in a milder spirit.

While the Hjörvarth-lay may in general be regarded as a remodelling of Frankish stories, transferred to a Scandinavian saga-hero, the story of his son Helgi, on the contrary, contains but few Frankish features. The conclusion of the story of Helgi and his brother Hethin p. 310. is in all its essentials a Scandinavian work.<sup>1</sup> Both

<sup>1</sup> Viktor Rydberg (*Undersökningar*, II, 252-264) holds the view that Helgi Hjör. is the god Baldr transformed into a hero, that Helgi's brother *Heðinn* (dat. *Heðni*) is *Hjör* (dat. *Heði*) as a hero, and that Ólaf Geirstadaalf also is Baldr transformed. I cannot agree with Rydberg's view; but still I regard it as possible that there are certain points of contact between the story of Helgi and Hethin and the story of Baldr and *Hjör*. In this connection it may be mentioned that Hotherus in Saxo (ed. Müller, p. 122), after having been conquered by Baldr, wanders, like Hethin, tired of life alone in deserted paths.

Odin's words to Bo in Saxo (p. 131): *potius a Balderi intersectoribus ultionem exacturum, quam armis innoxios oppressurum*, remind us of Helgi's words to his father in H. Hj., 10, 11: *léstu eld eta jofra bygðir, en þeir angr við þik ekki gǫrðu*, 'thou madest fire to devour the dwellings of princes who had done thee no harm.'

Hethin and his mother Álfhild appear to be Scandinavian, not West-Germanic saga-figures.

The attendant spirit (*fylgja*) in the tale of Helgi and Hethin has no parallel in the Hjathning-story. There is, however, something similar in the shorter Hallfreth's saga of the beginning of the thirteenth century.<sup>1</sup> When Hallfreth Vandræthaskáld was lying sick unto death on board a ship, he saw a great birnie-clad woman go over the billows. He understood that it was his attendant spirit, and declared himself separated from her. She then asked his brother Thorvald if he would accept her. He refused. Then said Hallfreth the younger, the skald's son: 'I will accept thee'; whereupon she vanished. The Helgi-lay is doubtless the model of this Hallfreth-story.<sup>2</sup>

The information which the O.N. story gives us concerning King Hjorvarth, and also (though to a less extent) that concerning his son Helgi, is based largely on Frankish tradition. Moreover, several of the persons with whom Hjorvarth and Helgi are brought into connection are really Franks, or persons who had something to do with Franks. And yet both these heroes were thought of and designated in the story as Scandinavian kings.

In the prose passage before st. 31, Hethin is represented as at home in *Norway* with his father King Hjorvarth. Afterwards he journeys southward (*suðr á lond*) p. 311.

<sup>1</sup> *Fornsógur*, ed. Vigfusson and Möbius, p. 114.

<sup>2</sup> Of the ceremonial in the course of which Hethin makes his vow, it is unnecessary to speak here.

until he meets his brother Helgi, who has been out on a warlike expedition. Helgi asks:

*hvat kantu segja  
nýra spjalla  
ör Nóregi? (st. 31).*

'What news from Norway canst thou tell?'

It is clear at all events that the author of this prose passage must have understood *ör Nóregi* as 'from Norway'; and there is every reason to believe that the poet who gave the lay its present form, had the same conception of the words of the verse. Helgi is therefore thought of here as a *Norwegian* hero. His home and Hethin's is called in the last strophe *Rogheimr*. That was most likely taken by the Norwegian poet to mean 'the dwelling-place of the Norwegian Rygir.'

Though the situation of Sváfa's home is not stated plainly, yet everything seems to indicate that the poet imagined it to be in *Denmark*.<sup>1</sup> The sword which Sváfa presents Helgi, with which to perform warlike deeds, lies in *Sigarsholm* (st. 8). The man whom the dying Helgi sends after Sváfa, is called *Sigarr* (st. 36). Helgi had agreed to fight on the *Plains of Sigarr* (*á Sigarsvøllum*, H. Hj., 35; *á Sigarsvelli* in the prose following). Apparently the poet did not imagine Sváfa's home as being very far from this place; for Helgi, after being fatally wounded, sends a messenger to her, whereupon she comes to his deathbed. If we connect the names above mentioned with the *Plains of Sigarr* (*Sigarsvøllu*) which the new-born Helgi Hund.

<sup>1</sup> This is also F. Jónsson's opinion, *Lit. Hist.*, 1, 249 f.



gets as a name-gift, and with the statement in an A.S. poem that *Sigehera* (i.e. Sigar) ruled long over the Sea-Danes, together with the relations in which the name Sigar occurs elsewhere in Scandinavian tradition, we see that this name Sigar and the compounds of which it forms a part, point to Denmark. The name of Sváva's father is *Eylimi*. I conjecture that the O.N. poet thought of him as a Jutish king, and brought his name into connection with *Limaferðr*, Limfjord. But I do not therefore hold that this was the original p. 312. conception. I intend to discuss this question more particularly in my investigation of the Sigurth-story.

The poet appears to have imagined Álf, Hróthmar's son, who slays Helgi, as king of a more southerly land, most likely one south of the Baltic, since Hróthmar has harried in Sváfaland, which may well be the land of the North-Swabians by the Elbe.<sup>1</sup>

We have another support for the theory that the Lay of Helgi Hjor. was composed by a Norwegian-speaking poet, in the fact that this work was influenced by a form of the story of the Hjathnings which, according to Olrik,<sup>2</sup> was Old Norse (*norraen*), and varied from the Danish form.

I am unable to prove in what district of Norway the poet who in Britain gave to the Hjorvarth-lay its present form, had his home. But it seems to me most likely that it was in the south-west; partly because

<sup>1</sup> Did the poet think in this connection of *Alfr* as 'King of the Elbe'? Cf. *dottur Alfs konungs, er land átti milli elfa tveggja* ('the daughter of King Álf, who possessed land between the two rivers, i.e. Gautelf and Raumelf,' *Sögubrot in Fornald. ss.*, i, 376). One of Hunding's sons, whom Helgi, son of Sigmund, kills (H. H., i, 14) is called *Alfr*.

<sup>2</sup> *Saksnes Oldhist.*, II, 191-196.

the hero's home is *Rogheimr*, partly because of the relations of the poem to Danish works.<sup>1</sup>

On the one hand, there is nothing to lead us to believe that the account of King Hjörvarth and his son Helgi reproduced the stories which from olden times were known in Norway, and which took form in popular tradition by the unconscious alteration of Norwegian historical events. On the contrary, I think I have shown in what precedes that we have before us poems composed by skalds of Scandinavian chieftains in Britain, and that these poems were much influenced by Frankish heroic stories, some of which became familiar to the Scandinavians in A.S. form.

p. 313. In the original story it was evidently not a Norwegian king who wooed the daughter of the King of Sváfaland; for his men come to Sváfaland by first riding over a high mountain, and afterwards fording a river (st. 5). According to the prose passage, the king travels thither by land.

There is no trace of there ever having been in Norway any real King Hjörvarth, or any king's sons Helgi or Hethin, in whom we might find the historical prototypes of the heroes of the poem.

In the prose passages in the Edda, as has already been noted, Helgi Hund. is said to be the reborn Helgi Hjör., and the evident parallelism in many features of the two stories supports this statement. This identification in itself seems to indicate that Helgi Hjör. was thought of from the outset as a hero who belonged to the same nationality as Helgi Hund.

<sup>1</sup> Did the poet form the name of the river *Samorn* by analogy with *Mørn*, the river of Mandal valley?



Now I have tried to show that Helgi Hund. was considered in the poem as a king of Denmark, a poetic representative of the Danish kings, and that he borrowed his name from the Shielding king Helgi, son of Halfdan. In agreement with this, Helgi Hjor., who is merely a poetical, not an historical personality, seems to have had from the outset closer bonds of union with Danish than with Norwegian kings.

The name of Helgi's father, *Hjorvarðr*, like that of Helgi himself, was probably borrowed from the Shielding-race. From *Béow.*, 2160 f, we learn that *Heorogâr*, son of the Shielding *Healfdene* (Halfdan), and elder brother of *Hrôðgâr* (Hroar) and *Hálga* (Helgi), had a son called the bold (*hwæt*) *Heorowearð* (Hjorvarth). From him Helgi's father in the poem may have borrowed his name.<sup>1</sup> Since the name Helgi Hjorvarthsson did [p. 345.]

<sup>1</sup> *Hjorvarðr Ylfingr*, a saga-king, is mentioned in the *Ynglingasaga* (chaps. 37-39, ed. F. J.), in *Sögubrot* (Fas., I, 338), and in *Nornagests þáttur* (chap. 2, p. 50 B). He was thought of either as a Shielding-king or as related to the Shieldings by marriage; for Granmar's daughter drinks his health with the words: *allir heilir Ylfingar at Hrólfs minni kraka*. In *Sögubrot* it is said that he killed King Ella (of England). This indicates that he belongs to the Danish Shielding-story which developed in England, and was thought of as the poetical representative of Danish viking-kings. He is so regarded in *Nornagests þáttur*, where it is said that Half, the Norwegian viking-king, extorted property from him. In the *Yngl. s.*, *Hjorvarðr Ylfingr* marries a daughter of Granmar, which shows that the story about him stood earlier in connection with the story of Helgi Hund. When this Granmar was represented as King of Sþóðermanland, a departure was made from the original situation. In origin, *Hjorvarðr Ylfingr* may be identical with the *Heorowearð* of *Béowulf*. (Detter, in Sievers, *Beit.*, XVIII, 104, combines in a different way *Hjorvarðr Ylfingr* with Helgi's father *Hjorvarth*.)

In the Shielding-stories which developed in Denmark and, following Danish stories, in Iceland, there is also a certain *Hjorvarðr* (Hjarvarth, Hiarthuar) mentioned; but he is the slayer of *Hrólfr Kraki*, and is not said to have been a Shielding.

not belong to an historical person, it is probable that a poet adopted Hjørvarth from the Shielding-race as the name of the father, not only because of the alliteration (cf. Helgi Hundingsbani, Helgi Haddingjaskati), but also because of the etymological meaning of the name 'sword-warder, sword-guardian,' since the stories of Helgi Hund., Helgi Hjør., Sigmund, and Sigurth all tell that the hero, when he is to begin his career, gets a sword as a gift.

p. 314. I leave undecided whether Helgi Hjør. got his name Helgi from the historical Helgi, son of Halfdan, like Helgi Hund., or from another Danish king, who might be regarded as the historical prototype of him who was remodelled from the story in *Sögubrot* into the warrior-king Helgi Hvassi (the keen) in Zealand, who was killed by his brother Hrœrik; but, at any rate, the name Helgi was, in my opinion, borrowed from the Shielding-story. It cannot, however, be proved that there ever lived an historical king who was called Helgi Hjørvarthsson.

The poem concludes with the following words of Helgi's brother Hethin, son of Hjørvarth, at Helgi's death-bed:

*Kystu mik, Sváfa !  
kem ek eigi áðr (better, apttr ?)  
Rogheims á vit  
né Rǫðulsfjalla,  
áðr ek hefnt hefik  
Hjørvarðs sonar,  
þess er buðlungr var  
beztu und sólu.*

'Kiss me, Sváfa! I will not come to Rogheim or the

Radiant Fells before I have revenged the son of Hjorvarth, (who was) the best Buthlung (prince) in the world.'

Originally, at any rate, it was not *Rógheimr*, 'the P. 315. home of strife,' which was thought of, but *Rogheimr*, 'the home of the Rygir' (from *Rygir*, gen. *Roga*). This name may have brought it about that in some later Norwegian redaction of the poem the home of Helgi and Hethin was located in Norway, the redactor having in mind the Norwegian *Rygir*. But in the A.S. poem *Widsið* we read (21 f):

*Hagena* (sc. *wöld*) *Holmrygum* and *Heoden*<sup>1</sup> *Glommum*,  
*Witta wöld Swæfum*.

Here *Hagena* and *Heoden*, i.e. Hogni and Hethin of the story of the Hjathnings, are named side by side; and here it is said that *Hagena* ruled over *Rygum*, i.e. the Rygir at the mouth of the river Weichsel, the *Ulmerugii* of Jordanes. Now there is evidently traditional connection between the Hethin of the Hjathning-story and Helgi's brother of that name. Therefore it seems to me probable that Svend Grundtvig was right in holding that Hethin's home was not originally thought of as the home of the Norwegian Rygir, but as that of the Rygir on the southern coast of the Baltic. Although the name Rügen is of Slavic origin, and was not formed from the name of the Germanic people Rygir (A.S. *Ryge*), the similarity in sound of *Ryge*, of whom *Hagena* was king, and Rügen may have helped to bring it about that *Hagena*'s opponent *Heoden* (Hethin) was brought into connection with *Heðinsey*

<sup>1</sup> The MS. has *Holmrycum* and *Henden*.

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(Hiddensee), near Rügen. In the name of Hethin's home, *Rogheimr*, 'the dwelling-place of the Rygir,' there is, perhaps, a reference to the time when the Danes had established themselves on the southern coast of the Baltic.

With Rogheim another expression in the poem is connected. In H. Hj., 6, the valkyrie Sváfa addresses Hjörvarth's son, who has not yet received any definite name, as follows :

*Síð mundu, Helgi!  
hringum rǫða,  
ríkr rógapaldr!  
né Rǫðulsvǫllum.*

- p. 316. 'It will be long, Helgi! . . . ere thou rulest over rings or the Radiant Plains.' Here *rógapaldr*, 'apple-tree of strife,' is a poetic term for a hero. But if we compare this place with st. 43,

*Rogheims á vit  
né Rǫðulsfjalla,*

it is clear that *rog-*, which alliterates with *rǫðuls* in both strophes, must originally have had the same meaning in both places. Therefore, I now believe, in accordance with a suggestion made by Svend Grundtvig,<sup>1</sup> that *ríkr rógapaldr*, 'thou mighty apple-tree of strife,' is an artistic modification of the original expression (in a corresponding Danish poem ?) *ríkr Roga baldr*, 'thou mighty lord of the Rygir.'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> He conjectured *Roga valdr* or *Roga baldr*.

<sup>2</sup> It is not improbable that, at the time when the extant Norwegian poem arose, the Danes in England pronounced *p* between two vowels, not, to be sure, as *b*, but still differently from Norwegians, so that *Roga-baldr* could sound to Norwegians like *róg-apaldr* when it was pronounced by the Danes.

This *rógapaldr* was in its turn imitated in *brynpings apaldr*, 'apple-tree of the birnie-meeting,' as the designation of a hero, in Sigrdr. 10. The expression used of the chieftain *Roga baldr*, 'lord of the Rygir,' agrees fully with such expressions as *gumena baldor*, *rinca baldor*, 'lord of men,' in A.S. poems; cf. *herbaldr*, in Sigrdr. 18.

This explanation of *rógapaldr* is confirmed in a remarkable way by the ballad of Ribold and Guldberg. This ballad seems to have been composed in Danish in England (probably about the year 1200), and to have been influenced by the ancient Lay of Helgi Hjör., a fact which proves, therefore, that this ancient lay was known among the Danes in England. In the old versions of the ballad, the hero is called *Ribold* (*Ribolt*), to which correspond the forms *Rigbolt*, *Rigebold* in modern Danish, *Rikeball* in modern Norwegian, and *Ribald*, *Ribbald* in modern Icelandic. I would explain P. 317. the name in the ballad as due to the fact that an ancient (Danish?) poem designated Helgi Hjör. as *Roga ríkr baldr*, where the extant Norwegian poem corresponding has *ríkr rógapaldr*. From the epithet in the old poem the Danish author of the ballad made up the name *Ríkibald* (*Ribold*) in England under the influence of English masculine names in *-bald*.

Since *Røðulsfjalla*, in H. Hj., 43, clearly corresponds to *Røðulsvøllum*, in H. Hj., 9, the older (Danish?) poem seems to have had in 43, *Røðulsvalla*, which the Norwegian poet altered by inserting the Norwegian mountains instead of the Danish plains.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Yet the two words interchange elsewhere. In *Vgluspá*, Cod. Reg. 36, (*aniba*) *fiollom* was first written, but this was corrected to *vollom*; cf. *niba fiollom*, 62.



If a Danish poem was the basis of our O.N. lay, Helgi, who was on a warlike expedition in the south, might, according to Grundtvig's supposition, have met his brother Hethin with the words: 'What news can you tell *from the North* (or *norðrvegi*, instead of *Nóregi*, H. Hj., 31)?' Compare H. H., I, 4, where the Norn cast one of the threads of fate for Helgi, the son of Sigmund, towards the North (*á norðrvega*). Yet this seems to me rather improbable.

As I have already shown, the relation of the Hjørvarth-lay to the ballad of Rodengaar and the Eagle also argues for the knowledge of an older version of the lay among the Danes in England. It is certain, moreover, that it was in the west<sup>1</sup> that the story of the Hjathnings, by which the Lay of Helgi Hjør. was influenced, got the form in which it was known to Norwegians and Icelanders.

## XXIV

## SAXO'S ACCOUNT OF REGNER AND SWANWHITE.

p. 318. SAXO GRAMMATICUS has several stories, besides that of the Danish king Helgi, which are generally acknowledged to stand in connection with the Lays of Helgi Hundingsbani and Helgi Hjørvarthsson.

The story of the love of Regner(us) and Swanwhite<sup>2</sup> (Suanhuita) contains three poems, and is doubtless,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. my *Bidrag til den ældste Skaldedigtningens Historie*, p. 101.

<sup>2</sup> Saxo, ed. Müller, Bk. II, pp. 68-72.



therefore, based on O.N. verses which were united by prose narrative. Several scholars<sup>1</sup> rightly describe this story as a parallel to the Eddic Lays of Helgi Hjörvarthsson.

Regner and Thorald(us), sons of the Swedish king Hunding, are set by their wicked stepmother Thorild(a) to tend cattle. In order to save them, Swanwhite, daughter of the Danish king Hadding (Hadingus), rides to Sweden, with 'sisters' who serve her.<sup>2</sup> She finds the king's sons in miserable clothes in the night surrounded by monsters of various kinds, elves, and demonic beasts, which prevent the maidens from riding on farther. Swanwhite bids her sisters not to dismount. She questions Regner, who replies that he and his brothers are the king's herd-boys. The cattle have got away from them, and for fear of punishment they dare not go home. Swanwhite looks at the youth more closely, and says in substance: 'Born of a king, not of a thrall, thou art; that I see by thy flashing eyes.' She incites the brothers to flee from the trolls, and Regner assures her of his courage: he fears no trolls, only the god Thor. When Swanwhite disperses the magic fog, the youth sees her in all her radiance. p. 319. She promises to become his bride, and gives him a sword as a first gift. He slays the trolls gathered about him, who after daybreak are burned in a fire. Regner's stepmother Thorild is one of them. Regner becomes king of Sweden, and Swanwhite his wife.

<sup>1</sup> Uhland, *Schriften*, VIII, 131 f; Sv. Grundtvig, *Heroiske Digting*, pp. 83 f; Olrik, *Saksnes Oldhist.*, II, 12; cf. I, 40; Müllenhoff, *Ztsch. f. d. Alt.*, XXIII, 128; Detter, in Sievers, *Beit.*, XVIII, 96-105.

<sup>2</sup> *Sororibus in famulitium sumptis.*

When Regner dies, Swanwhite's grief is too great to bear, and she very soon follows him in death.<sup>1</sup>

Saxo makes Høthbrodd, who fights with Helgi, a son of Regner and Swanwhite.

Swanwhite is also the name of the king's daughter who loves Hromund Greipsson, the opponent of Kára's lover the Hadding-hero Helgi. The name Swanwhite was perhaps, therefore, transferred to the Regner-story from the lost poem on Helgi Haddingjaskati.<sup>2</sup> But originally, at all events, this name doubtless came from the swan-maiden in the Wayland-lay. It was also due to the influence of this lay that the maidens who follow Swanwhite in the Regner-story are called her 'sisters.'<sup>3</sup>

In the feature that Swanwhite and her sisters ride on horses, we have an imitation of the First Helgi-lay and the Hrímgærth-lay. Swanwhite seeks the young Regner, as Sváva seeks Helgi. Swanwhite's gift of a sword to the youth as a betrothal present, is taken from the Lay of Helgi Hjörvarthsson.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Interea Regnero apud Svetiam defuncto, conjunx ejus Svanhvita parvo post et ipsa morbo ex moestitia contracto decedit, fato virum insecuta, a quo vita distrahi passa non fuerat. Fieri namque solet, ut quidam ob eximiam caritatem, quam vivis impenderant, etiam vita excedentes comitari contendunt* (Saxo, p. 82).

<sup>2</sup> We may note that the name *Hadding* occurs in both these stories.

<sup>3</sup> *Völund.* 2 has *þeira systir*, where, however, the older expression was possibly *þeirar systir*.

<sup>4</sup> The verses on the sword in Saxo, p. 72,

*Ferrea vis tenerum mentis confortet acumen,  
Atque animus dextrae noverit esse comes,*

may be compared with the verses on the sword in II. IIj., 9,

*hugr er í hjalti,  
ógn er í oddi  
þeim er eiga getr.*

'There is courage in the hilt, terror in the point for its owner.'

Swanwhite helps Regner, as Sváva Helgi, against a female troll who wishes to cause the youth's destruction in the night-time, but whose power is broken by the approach of dawn. Moreover Regner, though dressed as a herd-boy, is recognised by his flashing eyes; with this we may compare H. H., II, 2, where we read of Helgi, son of Sigmund, who is disguised as a slave woman: 'Hagal's (female) servant has flashing eyes.' The name Hunding was also probably borrowed from the Lay of Helgi Hundingsbani.<sup>1</sup>

On the other hand, the king's son Regner and his brother, whose flashing eyes reveal their noble race in spite of their miserable garb, remind us of the brothers Helgi and Hroar in Hrólfr Kraki's saga. We find, therefore, in this another bond of connection between Helgi Hund. and Helgi son of Halfdan. Swanwhite and Sigrún both die of grief; here also the influence of the Sigrún-story is manifest.

In the story of Regner and Swanwhite we read of a magic cloud or mist.<sup>2</sup> This feature was doubtless borrowed from the Irish. In Irish tales, both ancient and modern, 'a druidical mist' is often mentioned. In the story of the first battle of Mag Tuired, we are told that the battle-furies Badb, Macha, and Morrighu sent out magic showers and storm-clouds which contained thick fogs.<sup>3</sup> In a story in the Ossin epic-cycle, 'The Chase of Slieve Fuad,' edited from p. 321.

<sup>1</sup> With the verse *Framea quid prodest ubi languet debile pectus* (Saxo, p. 72) may be compared Fáfn. 30: *Hugr er betri en sé hjors megin*, 'courage is better than is the might of the sword.'

<sup>2</sup> *Ablegato nubilae inumbrationis vapore, praetentis ori tenebras suda perspicuitate discussit* (Saxo, ed. M., p. 71).

<sup>3</sup> *Rev. Celt.*, I, 40.

MSS. of the eighteenth century, a magic fog is spread about so that men cannot find their way, and so that Finn comes into the power of supernatural beings.<sup>1</sup>

We have seen that the story of Regner and Swan-white is later than the Hrímgæth-lay, which, as I have pointed out, seems to have been composed in the first half of the eleventh century by a Norwegian who lived for a time in Dublin, and that it borrowed many features from that lay, as well as from other Helgi-poems. Since, now, the Regner-story also adopted the Irish account of the magic fog, it supports my theory as to the circumstances in which the Helgi-lays arose.

This Regner-story dates from the early Christian period when all were still familiar with heathen beliefs. The god Thor is here associated with trolls, just as in several stories of a later period he is a troll outright.

## XXV

## SVÁFA AND THÓRGÆTH HÖLGABRÚTH.

THÓRGÆTH HÖLGABRÚTH is known especially from the stories of Earl Hákon. In a clear and thorough investigation,<sup>2</sup> Gustav Storm has shown that *Hölgabrúðr* is the oldest form of her surname; likewise that, under the name of Thora, she is spoken of in Saxo,<sup>3</sup> whose account explains the original meaning of her surname, which cannot be discovered from the Icelandic sources.

Saxo's narrative is as follows: Helgi (Helgo), king

<sup>1</sup> In Joyce, *Old Celtic Romances*, p. 363.

<sup>2</sup> In *Arkiv f. nord. Filol.*, II, 125 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Ed. Müller, Bk. III, pp. 116 ff.

of Hálogaland, sent out men several times to woo in his name Thora, a daughter of Gusi (Cuso), king of the Finns and Bjarms. It was customary at that time for young men to woo on their own account; but Helgi had such a bad impediment in his speech that he was ashamed to talk, not merely to strangers, but even to those of his own house. Gusi dismissed the messengers with the answer, that the man who dared not plead his own cause did not deserve to get his daughter to wife. Helgi then succeeded in inducing Høth (Hotherus) to go to Norway with a fleet and woo for him. Høth pleaded so well that Gusi finally answered that he would take counsel with his daughter and do as she wished. Thora's answer was favourable, and Gusi consented to the betrothal. Later, Saxo tells how Høth poured out his sorrow to Helgi, and how he gave Helgi and Thora rich gifts.

This story, as appears from Olrik's investigations, was brought by the Icelander Arnald Thorvaldsson from the west coast of Norway to Denmark. With the help of Storm's and Detter's<sup>1</sup> articles on the subject, I shall try to get nearer to the source of the tale.

In my opinion, Thórgerth Hølgabrúth, and the Thora spoken of in Saxo, arose from a remodelling of Sváfa, especially from Sváfa as she appears in the Hrímgærth-lay.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Der Mythos von Hölgi, Þórgerðr und Irpa*, in *Ztsch. f. d. Alt.*, xxxii, 394-402. The same author previously suggested a different theory in *Arkiv f. nord. Filol.*, iv, 66, note 2.

<sup>2</sup> Neither Storm, nor Detter, nor Olrik (*Saksas Oldhist.*, ii, 24) has suggested any connection between Helgi or Hølg, the bridegroom of Thora or Thórgerth, and Helgi Hljor.; but Detter connects this Helgi with Hrólfr's father Helgi.

Sváfa is Helgi's bride, just as Thora is Helgi's bride, and as Thórgerth is called *Hølgabruðr*, 'the bride of Hølgi, Helgi.' In conversation with Helgi, Hethin calls Sváfa 'thy bride' (H. Hj., 32), and Helgi addresses Sváfa as *brúðr* (H. Hj., 7, 41).

When the woman whom I take to be a remodelled Sváfa received the name *þórgerðr*, the second part of her name, namely, *-gerðr*, was doubtless chosen because p. 323. Sváfa is placed in opposition to *Hríngerðr*. The name *þórgerðr* designates her as the *Gerðr*, or supernatural woman, closely connected with the god Thor. That she was brought into connection with Thor seems to be due to the fact that the man who remodelled the Sváfa-story imagined Atli, who converses with Hríngerth, to be the god Thor in human form.

He was led to this opinion by the following considerations. Atli says: 'I am the worst enemy of female trolls; often have I killed night-riding witches.'<sup>1</sup> Now Thor was precisely the person of whom this could truly be said. Atli had also shared in the killing of the giant Hati, who has the same name as one of the sun-wolves; and it was he who kept Hríngerth talking until the sun rose, and she was changed by its rays into stone.<sup>2</sup> This also would suit the god Thor; for, according to the poem *Alvíssmál*, he kept the dwarf Allwise talking until the latter was transformed by the sun's rays into stone.

We have further evidence that Helgi's watchman

<sup>1</sup> *Mjök em ek glífrum gramastr, . . . ek hefí opt . . . kvalðar kveldrífur* (H. Hj., 15).

<sup>2</sup> *Dagr er nú, Hríngerðr! en þik dvalða hefir Atli til aldraga.* (H. Hj., 30).



Atli was really regarded, later, as the god Thor in human form: in a verse in Snorri's Edda,<sup>1</sup> Atli is given as one of Thor's names. This conception of Thor is analogous to that by which Odin is often made to appear in human form, sometimes as a man in the king's service—*e.g.* as Brúni at the court of Harald Hildetann.

Moreover, it is clear that Thórgerth was thought of, at any rate at a later time, as a being closely connected with Thor; for in a story in *Njálssaga*, chap. 88, we read that Earl Hákon and Dale-Guthbrand worshipped p. 324. together in a temple in which there were images of Thor and the sisters Thórgerth *Höldabréðr*, and Irpa.

Saxo calls the bride of Helgi, king of Hálogaland, not Thórgerth, but *Thora*. Storm thinks this name but a shortened form of Thórgerth, used as a term of endearment. Detter calls attention to the fact that Saxo also tells of another Thora who was Helgi's bride—namely, of that Thora who bore to the Danish King Helgi a daughter Yrsa (Ursa), who in her turn bore to her own father a son Hrólf (Rolpho), later king of Denmark. It looks, therefore, as if Thórgerth, the name of the bride of Helgi, king of Hálogaland, was changed by Saxo into Thora, under the influence of the name of Thora, the love of Helgi, king of Denmark.

Just as hail falls on the high trees from the manes of the horses of Sváfa and her maidens when they ride

<sup>1</sup> I, 553, 2.—In the story of Regner and Swanwhite, in Saxo (Bk. 11, p. 71), which shows the influence of the Hrímgærth-lay, Regner says, when in the night surrounded by trolls he speaks with Swanwhite, that he fears no troll, but only the god Thor. This indicates, perhaps, that the author of the Regner-story also regarded Atli in the Hrímgærth-lay as Thor in human form.

through the air, so showers of hail are called forth by Thórgerth Hølgabrúth. Just as Sváfa saves Helgi's ships in a storm, and comes afterwards among the men to moor his fleet, and just as, according to the prose account, she often protects him in battle, so Thórgerth is on the ship of Earl Hákon, who is of Hølgi's race, to protect him in the sea-fight in the Hjørung-bay. In the version of the *Jónsvíkingasaga* preserved in Arngrím Jónsson's translation, Earl Hákon addresses Thórgerth in worship thus: 'Thou who wakest the winds and settlest them to rest, thou who callest forth storms, hail-showers, and torrents of rain.'<sup>1</sup>

Thórgerth, like Sváfa, is the daughter of a king. Sváfa is called 'golden' or 'glittering with much gold,'<sup>2</sup> and receives rings from Helgi. Thórgerth bears in the temple a gold ring on her arm, and offerings of gold and silver are made to her.

Saxo tells that Thora's suitor had so bad an impediment in his speech that he was ashamed to talk not only to strangers, but also to his own family. This feature has its explanation in the statement in the prose p. 325. passage regarding the young Helgi Hjør., that he was taciturn. The first time Sváfa speaks with him she upbraids him for his habitual silence (H. Hj., 6).

We read also in Saxo that Helgi sent men on different occasions to Thora's father to woo her for him, but that the suit was rejected because he did not come himself. Finally, Hother succeeded in obtaining Thora as Helgi's bride. This account is based on features which are applied in the Eddic lay to Helgi's father Hjør-

<sup>1</sup> Ed. Gjessing, chap. 15, p. 44.

<sup>2</sup> H. Hj., 25: *margullin* (i.e. *marg-gullin*) *mær*.

varth. Hjørvarth sent messengers to woo Sigrinn, but his offer was rejected; later, however, he won his bride by the help of his messenger, Atli.<sup>1</sup> The name Atli the author of the Thora-story could not use for the king's messenger, since he imagined Atli to be the god Thor in human form. Perhaps he chose Hother as the messenger because eloquence was ascribed to this hero in some other tale with which the poet was familiar.<sup>2</sup>

From Sváfa were transferred to Thórgerth not only the power of calling forth showers of hail, but also that of pacifying storms. These marvellous powers were ascribed to Finns and Bjarms elsewhere in Scandinavian stories.<sup>3</sup> That explains why Thora (*i.e.* Thórgerth Hølgabrúth) in Saxo's story is represented as the daughter of *Cuso* or *Gusi*, king of the Finns and Bjarms. p. 326. The name *Gusi* or *Gusir* seems to be Norse, not Lappish,<sup>4</sup> and to mean 'the maker of wind (of gusts of wind).'

<sup>1</sup> Olrik (*S. O.*, II, 24 f) thinks that the story of Helgi and Thora, which was composed by a Norwegian saga-writer, presupposes earlier stories of actual events. So far, in my opinion, he is right; but I cannot agree with the view he seems to hold that the story has no connection with any heroic lay. I have, I think, shown that it is a saga-writer's remodelling of an heroic poem.

<sup>2</sup> Did the relation between Helgi Hjør. and *Hðinn* (dat. *Hðni*) have any influence on the relation between Helgi, Thora's bridegroom, and *Hðr* (dat. *Hði*)? There are other points of contact between *Hðinn* and *Hðr*. See my *Studien über die Entstehung der nord. Götter- u. Heldensagen*, pp. 92-97, 174 f.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Fritzner in (*Norsk*) *Hist. Tidsskrift*, IV, 200 ff; Uhland, *Schriften*, VI, 403.

<sup>4</sup> This is Olrik's opinion (*S. O.*, I, 65, note 1). *Gusi* is doubtless connected with O.N. *gustr*, 'a gust of wind,' Dialectal Norw. *gusa*, 'to blow gently' (in Ross), *gðsa*, 'currents of air' (in Aasen). I conjecture that the form *Gusir*, with short first syllable, arose from *Gusi* by analogy. Dettér (*Ztsch. f. d. Alt.*, xxxii, 456) has already brought the name into connection with *gustr*; but he writes incorrectly *Gúsi*, and refers it to *gólta*.

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Helgi, the bridegroom of Thora or Thórgerth, owes his origin to Helgi, Sváfa's bridegroom. The latter Helgi is in the Eddic poem a *Norwegian* hero. When the heroine was made into the daughter of a Finnish king, it was natural that her bridegroom, the Norwegian hero, should be identified with Helgi or Hølg, the eponym of the Háleygir, and made king of Hálogaland, in order that his home might be brought nearer that of his bride. This identification is also found in Saxo, who mentions him as *Helgo Halogiae rex*.

Since Helgi, the betrothed of Thora, has his origin in Helgi, the betrothed of Sváfa, then the form of his name with *e*, viz. *Helgi* (which Saxo presupposes) is more original than *Hølg* or *Hølg*. These are parallel forms of *Helgi*, and were especially used by Norwegians.<sup>1</sup>

p. 327. In old Icelandic the form *Hølg* is only used of the eponymous hero of Hálogaland, and was doubtless the usual form of his name; for popular etymology sought a linguistic bond (which did not exist originally)

<sup>1</sup> In this point I disagree with Storm, *Arkiv*, II, 128. In *Hauksbók* the man's name *Helgi*, -a, appears in the forms *Hølg*, *Hølg*; the woman's name *Helga*, -u, in the form *Hølg*, -u. These forms with *a* I regard as Norwegianisms. We find also *Høylgi*, Dipl. Norv., I, No. 363 (Year 1359, Indre Sogn); *Høylgi*, D.N., II, No. 318 (1353, Oslo); *Høylgi*, D.N., III, No. 496 (1391, Vestfold); to these Prof. O. Rygh has kindly called my attention.

Ivar Aasen in *Norsk Navnebog*, p. 22, has the masc. forms *Hølg*. (*Hølj*) and *Hølg* (*Hølj*) from Telemarken, Nummedalen, and Hallingdalen; *Høye* from Telemarken. These are, doubtless, forms of the same name as *Helgi*. Wiel has from Ringerike *Hølg*, masc., but *Hølg*, fem. Thus it appears that both *Hølg* and *Hølg* were used. Cf. *hølti* (in Tel. and other places *høste*) and *hølti* (*høllti* in *Mansngskviða*, 8 and 28), alongside *hølti* from *hølt til*, *høltar* from the stem *hølt*-, and others. A *u*-sound is called forth between the *l* and a following consonant.

between the name of the hero and his country. The reason why the saga-king with whom Thórgerth is united is usually called *Hölgi* in Icelandic documents, and not *Helgi*, appears to be that he was identified with the hero of the race of the Háleygir.<sup>1</sup>

The author of the First Helgi-lay was born in the west of Norway, and lived among Irish poets. In the First Helgi-lay, which he composed in Britain, he describes Sigrún with features borrowed to some extent from Irish battle-goddesses. This same poet composed the Hrímgærth-lay, in which Sváfa clearly resembles Sigrún in the First Lay, and is described with features drawn from the Irish battle-goddesses. The influence of Irish conceptions, which thus affected the portrayal of Sváfa in the Hrímgærth-lay, becomes still greater in the description of Thórgerth Hølgabrúth, where other Irish ideas appear.

Although Sváfa is represented as a supernatural woman endowed with marvellous powers, she is, nevertheless, not thought of either as a goddess or as a female troll. With Thórgerth Hølgabrúth, on the contrary, the situation is different. From the very fact that Thora is represented as the daughter of the Finnish King Gusi, we see that she was regarded as at least a half-troll by nature; and in later times this side of Thórgerth's character is made more prominent. In the versified list of names inserted in Snorri's Edda we

<sup>1</sup> In *Njálssaga*, chap. 113, we find: *Þórgæðr dóttir Háleygs* (in one ms. *Helga*) *konungs af Hálogalandi*; but this is, as Storm has pointed out in *Arkiv*, II, 128, a corruption of *Hervør dóttir Þórgæðar Eyllaugs dóttur konungs* (in other MSS. *hersis ór Sogni*) in *Landnámabók*, I, 10.

p. 328. find *Hølgabrúðr* among the names of female trolls. Her surname is changed in Iceland into *Hølgatroll* (in this form as early as in the Grammatical Treatise of about 1140), *holda troll*, *hørga tröll*, *Høðatröll*, *Huldartröll*, in the Faroes into *illgerðsfrú*. She appears in many fabulous stories as the worst of trolls.

This conception of Thórgerth Hølgabrúth as opposed to Sváfa seems to me to have developed under the influence of the Irish accounts of Badb and other supernatural female beings who are brought into connection with battle and war. They are regarded as malicious,<sup>1</sup> and as gifted with magic powers.<sup>2</sup>

While Sváfa is not thought of as a goddess, Thórgerth is classed among the gods, and is said to have been worshipped in temples and to have received sacrifices.<sup>3</sup> The Irish Badb is also called a goddess.<sup>4</sup> When once the conception of Thórgerth as a heathen goddess was established, there could easily develop in later times, under the influence of ideas common in the Middle Ages, fabulous tales of her temple and statue, of sacrifices to her and worship of her. All that, however, was foreign to historical heathendom among the Scandinavians.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Fé* (*Fea*) was the name of one of the battle-goddesses, and *fé* was used of all that was bad (*Rev. Celt.*, 1, 35; *Cormac's Glossary*, trans., 75). Of the battle-god *Neit* and his wife *Nemon* we read: 'poisonous were the pair'; 'both were wicked' (*Rev. Celt.*, 1, 36).

<sup>2</sup> *Rev. Celt.*, 1, 33. They are called *lamiae*, i.e. witches (*Rev. Celt.*, xii, 128).

<sup>3</sup> Thórgerth is *blótuð* (Sn. Ed., 1, 400). In *Njáls.*, chap. 89, Thórgerth is named as one of the *gøð*; likewise in *Harðarsaga*, chap. 19.

<sup>4</sup> *Rev. Celt.*, 1, 34.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Vigfusson, *C. P. B.*, 1, 402; Golther, *Handbuch d. germ. Myth.*, p. 484.



With Thórgerth is associated a sister *Irpa*, who in the battle of the Jónsvíkings is said to have been seen on Hákon's ships along with Thórgerth, and to have acted exactly like her. Irpa is not mentioned in Saxo in the story of Helgi and Thora, and indeed she would seem useless in a story of Helgi's wooing. Snorri says in *Skáldskaparmál* that both Hölgi and Thórgerth received divine worship; but he does not mention Irpa. She can scarcely be explained by the Sváfa-story, and does not seem to have been very prominent in the oldest form of the account of Thórgerth Hølgabrúth. p. 329.

This introduction of the sister, who also helps Hákon in battle, seems to me to be due to Irish influence. Among the Irish two war-goddesses are several times mentioned together. Thus in a poem in the Book of Leinster, Badb and Nemain appear, and in another place in the same MS., Fea and Nemain. In Irish genealogies these goddesses are said to have been sisters. Moreover, Badb, Macha, and Morrigan (or Ana), who are all battle-goddesses or battle-furies, are also said to have been sisters.<sup>1</sup>

*Irpa* means 'the brown one,' from the adjective *jarpr*, 'brown.' This name may have been given the sister because she was thought of as a female troll.<sup>2</sup> Björn Haldorsen states that *irpa* can signify a she-wolf. In an Irish story about Cuchulinn, the war-fury Morrigan transforms herself into a she-wolf.<sup>3</sup>

The surname Hølgabrúth, and the relation of the

<sup>1</sup> See *Rev. Celt.*, 1, 35 and 36 f.

<sup>2</sup> *Íma* is the designation of a female troll, and of a she-wolf; cf. *Ímleitr*, 'dark,' of the wolf.

<sup>3</sup> Stokes and Windisch, *Irische Texte*, II, 2, p. 252 f.

Thórgerth-story to the Lay of Helgi Hjör., show that Saxo's account, in which Thora (*i.e.* Thórgerth) is Helgi's *bride*, is more original than Snorri's in *Skáldskaparmál*,<sup>1</sup> where Thórgerth Hølgabrúth is the *daughter* of King Hølgi in Hálogaland. Since, as it appears, it was due to Irish influence that Thórgerth was given a sister Irpa, it is probable that it was also due to Irish influence that at the same time Helgi or Hølgi was no longer represented as her bridegroom, but as her father.<sup>2</sup>

p. 330. That Thórgerth Hølgabrúth should be brought into connection with Earl Hákon, was almost inevitable when the Hølgi or Helgi from whom she got her surname came to be regarded as the eponym of Hálogaland, or the ancestral hero of the Háleygir. For the race of earls to which Hákon belonged had their home in Hálogaland, and were therefore called *Háleygjætt*, 'the race of the Háleygir,' or, in a verse which is ascribed to Hornklofi, *Hølga ætt*, 'the race of Hølgi.'<sup>3</sup>

Moreover, we have every reason to believe that Earl

<sup>1</sup> Sn. Edda, I, 400.

<sup>2</sup> According to Irish genealogies (*Rev. Celt.*, I, 35), the war-goddesses Fé and Nemon were daughters of Elcmar of Brug (Newgrange, near Boyne). It may be that a Norseman who regarded Thórgerth as corresponding to an Irish war-goddess, identified Thórgerth's (or Thora's) bridegroom Helgi (or Hølgi) with Elcmar, and therefore made Helgi (or Hølgi) into the father of Thórgerth and Irpa. The second part of *Elcmar* may have been thought to be *már*, 'great,' and therefore separated from the rest. The fact that there was an old Irish adjective *elc*, 'bad,' may also have had some influence. Cf. further the fact that the man who in *Hyndl.* 18 is called *Jǫsurmarr* (*jǫsurmar*) is called *Jǫfurr* in *Flat.*, I, 25 (= *Fornald.*, II, 9).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. G. Storm in *Arkiv*, II, 129 f.

Hákon was in reality a zealous worshipper of Thor;<sup>1</sup> and since the story represented Thórgerth Hølgabrúth as a goddess closely connected with Thor, it was natural for Earl Hákon also to be represented as one of *her* zealous worshippers.

Just as Thórgerth Hølgabrúth was attached to a single chieftain, so the Irish believed that the battle-goddess Badb was attached to certain families.<sup>2</sup>

In the story of the battle of the Jómsvíkings in Odd p. 331. the Monk's saga of Ólaf Tryggvason,<sup>3</sup> we read: 'Thórgerth Hølgabrúth came with Earl Hákon to the battle, and then fell many of the vikings, while others fled'; and in the saga of the Jómsvíkings it is said that a second-sighted man saw Thórgerth Hølgabrúth and Irpa on Hákon's ship in the battle. In like manner the Irish battle-goddesses go into battle with their favourites. In the story of the first battle of Mag Tuired we read: 'We will go with you,' said the daughters, viz. Badb, Macha, Morrigan, and Danann (or Anann), 'to the chieftains who helped Tuatha-de-Danann.'<sup>4</sup> According to the Book of Leinster, Cuchulinn, before his last battle, reminds his horse of the time when Badb accompanied them on their warlike expeditions.<sup>5</sup>

When the Irish battle-goddesses appear in battle,

<sup>1</sup> The skald Kormak composed a poem in honour of Hákon's father, Sigurth, in which he speaks of the sacrificial banquets maintained by Sigurth. The refrains in the poem are taken from the mythical stories known at that time. At this point it runs: *sitr þórr í reiðu*, 'Thor sits in his carriage.' The weights of the scales which Hákon gave the skald Einar were engraved, according to the oldest form of the saga of the Jómsvíkings, with pictures of Thor and Odin. Cf. Storm, *Arkiv*, II, 133-135.

<sup>2</sup> *Rev. Celt.*, I, 34.

<sup>4</sup> *Rev. Celt.*, I, 40.

<sup>3</sup> Munch's edition, p. 15.

<sup>5</sup> *Rev. Celt.*, I, 50.

there is sure to be a great slaughter of the enemy.<sup>1</sup> They are said to bring the army into confusion.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, we read in Icelandic: 'Thórgerth Hølgabrúth came with Hákon to the battle. Then fell many vikings, while some fled.'

Like Thórgerth and Irpa, the Irish battle-furies also have power over the elements. Of the battle in the Hjørung Bay we read in the *Jómsvíkingasaga*: 'A fearful storm began to gather in the north, and there arose a dark, thick cloud. This spread quickly over the whole heaven, and from it there came a rainstorm, with thunder and lightning. People saw Thórgerth Hølgabrúth on Hákon's ship. From every finger of the troll-wife an arrow seemed to them to fly, and every arrow pierced a man, so that he died therefrom. In that shower so great were the hailstones which fell that each one weighed an ounce.'

With this we may compare the Irish account of the first battle of Mag Tuired. Baddb, Macha, and p. 332. Morrighu sent out 'druidically formed showers' (*cetha dolfe draigehta*) and storm-clouds, with fog, and they made torrents of rain, with fire and streams of red blood, to pour down from the heavens about the heads of the warriors.<sup>3</sup>

The hailstorm in the battle of the Jómsvíkings is mentioned in several sagas and in Saxo, also in the *Bíadrápa* of Thorkell Gíslason (of uncertain date, but probably of the twelfth century), and in the *Jómsvíkingadrápa* of Bjarni Kolbeinsson, who became bishop of the Orkneys in 1188. In the last-named poem (ed. Wisén, st. 32) we have the first mention of Thórgerth

<sup>1</sup> *Rev. Celt.*, 1, 40.

<sup>2</sup> *id.*, 1, 42.

<sup>3</sup> *id.*, 1, 40.

as one who called forth a hailstorm: 'I have heard that Hölgabrúth then made the evil shower fall.' Of the other references to Thórgerth, the oldest are the following:—(1) The sentence, 'A great woman died, when Hölgatroll died,' in the Icelandic Grammatical Treatise of ca. 1140;<sup>1</sup> (2) the name Hölgabrúth in the versified list of names attached to Snorri's Edda; and (3) Saxo's story (from ca. 1200) of Thora and Helgi. The *Jómsvíkingasaga*, in which she appears, is, according to Gustav Storm, in its oldest form certainly older than ca. 1220. It is clear, therefore, that the story of Thórgerth Hölgabrúth and of her relations to Earl Hákon, was current as early as the first part of the twelfth century.

On the other hand, Thórgerth is not mentioned in Thórth Kolbeinsson's *Eiríksdrápa*, which was composed, at the earliest, in 1014, and which mentions the battle of the Jómsvíkings. Nor is she mentioned in the extant verses by Earl Hákon's contemporaries, Tind Hallkelsson, Einar Skálaglamm, and Eyvind Skálda-spillir. Her name does not occur either among the mythical names in the *drápa* which Kormak composed about Sigurth, the father of Earl Hákon. Tind Hallkelsson took part in the battle of the Jómsvíkings (which is put at 986). He composed a poem about it, of which there are seven whole and six half strophes preserved.<sup>2</sup> In these verses the poet describes the battle minutely, though without mentioning many characteristic features, p. 333.

<sup>1</sup> *Den første og den anden gramm. afh. i Snorres Edda*, ed. Dahlerup and F. Jónsson, pp. 15, 48, 80 f: *hý dó, þá es hölgatroll dó, en heyr þe til höddo, þá es þórr bar huerenn*. The sentence was formed to show the difference between *d* and double *d* (D).

<sup>2</sup> Edited, with commentary, by F. Jónsson in *Aarbøger*, 1886.

and he states that Hákon sent a mighty host to Odin. We would expect, therefore, to have the skald mention the Earl's sacrifice to Thórgerth Hølgabrúth and Irpa, and refer also to their supposed influence on the battle, if he had known anything about the matter. But such knowledge he could not have had.

This investigation has, I hope, made clear that Thórgerth Hølgabrúth was not from the outset a Finnish goddess.<sup>1</sup> It was because she had ascribed to her the same power over the elements as that possessed by the Finnish trolls and mythical beings, that she was represented by Norwegians and Icelanders as a Finnish divinity. And Hølgi, with whom she was associated, was regarded as identical with Hølgi, the tribal hero of Hálogaland, to whom had been transferred a story, earlier told by the Norwegians, of the worship of a divinity among a people related to the Finns. Snorri gives us the following information in *Skáldskaparmál*:<sup>2</sup> King Hølgi, from whom Hálogaland gets its name, was father of Thórgerth Hølgabrúth. Offerings were made to them both. Hølgi's grave-mound was so constructed that a layer of gold and silver, that had been offered to him, alternated regularly with a layer of earth and stone. Snorri quotes a verse by Skúli Thorsteinsson (first half of the eleventh century), showing that Skúli knew the story of Helgi's grave-mound. The same information, however, is given elsewhere of the Bjarms and their god Jumala (Jómali).<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This was the opinion of Sv. Grundtvig, *Heroiske Digting*, p. 93, and Henry Petersen, *Nordboernes Gudeyrkelse og Gudetro*, p. 95.

<sup>2</sup> Chap. 45, Sn. Edda, I, 400.

<sup>3</sup> *Fas.*, II, 176, 513; Boer's ed. (1888), pp. 29-31.



In the saga of St. Ólaf in *Heimskringla*, we read that there was an enclosed place in the land of the Bjarms, by the side of the river Dwina, containing a mound in which gold and silver and earth were thrown together, and on that spot stood a richly adorned image of Jumala. Similarly, it is said in *Orvaroddssaga* that there was in the land of the Bjarms, by the Dwina, a mound in which earth and silver were thrown together; to that hill must be borne a handful of earth and a handful of silver in memory of every person who should die; and the same must be done for every new-born child. P. 334.

It was, therefore, under the influence of the conception of Helgi as the divine tribal hero of Hálogaland, who was worshipped with Finnish rites, that Thórgerth, being associated with him, came to be thought of as a goddess, possessing the magic powers attributed to Finnish divinities.

Yet Thórgerth Hølgabrúth was neither a family-divinity<sup>1</sup> nor a (real or invented) ancestress of Earl Hákon, whom the latter worshipped in the body.<sup>2</sup> On the contrary, she was fabricated long after the days of Earl Hákon, after the model of Sváfa in the Lay of Helgi Hjör., by a man who knew the Hríngerth-lay. Now, this lay was composed, ca. 1025-1035, in Britain, by a poet born in the west of Norway who had sojourned with Irish poets at the royal court of Dublin, and who had there become familiar with Irish stories. Thórgerth Hølgabrúth and the story about her were

<sup>1</sup> As Munch thought, *Norske Folks Hist.*, 1, 332.

<sup>2</sup> As was thought by Vigfusson (*C. P. B.*, 1, 402) and Storm (*Arkiv*, 11, 133).

not, then, created before ca. 1050. Since the influence of Irish conceptions appears alongside that of the Lay of Helgi Hjör., we see that the Thórgerth myth must have been created by a Norwegian (most likely North Norwegian) poet in Ireland.

Even at the outset this myth seems to have been embodied, not in an ancient mythic-heroic lay, but in 'a story of ancient times' (*fornaldarsaga*). It developed into two essentially different forms: the older, in which Thórgerth (in Saxo, Thora), is the bride of Helgi (or Hølg), and the daughter of Gusi, as in Saxo; the younger, in which she has become Hølg's daughter, appears in connection with a sister Irpa, and is regarded partly as a goddess, partly as a troll. The younger form developed separately from the older under Irish

p. 335.

influence, and, like the older form, seems, therefore, to have arisen in Ireland, or at all events to have been shaped by men who had visited Ireland or Scotland. Detter has proposed<sup>1</sup> a theory as to the origin and development of the Thórgerth myth, which is essentially different from that just suggested. In his opinion, the myth has its origin in the Danish story of the Danish king Helgi, Hrólfr's father (whom he supposes to have been brought by popular etymology into connection with Hálogaland), and of this Helgi's relations with Thora, Yrsa's mother, who corresponds to the Ólǫf in the Icelandic sources.

To this theory, however, it may be objected that Thora as the name of Yrsa's mother occurs in Danish sources only, not in Norwegian-Icelandic, which, on the contrary, call her Ólǫf; and yet the Icelandic form of

<sup>1</sup> In *Ztsch. f. d. Alt.*, xxxii, 394 ff.

the story shows itself to be more original in other respects than the Danish.<sup>1</sup> Detter's theory does not explain the change of the name Thora to Thórgerth in the Icelandic sources. Nor does it explain the repeated suits of the king of Hálogaland to Thora, or the feature in Saxo that, by reason of an impediment in his speech, he would not speak with others. Finally, this theory does not explain why Thórgerth came to be regarded as a troll-wife or goddess, possessing power over the elements.

Yet I also suppose that the Danish story of Hrólfr's father influenced Saxo's story of the king of Hálogaland in that he calls the latter's bride Thora, not Thórgerth; and I agree with Detter in explaining the association of the bridegroom of Thora or Thórgerth, viz. Helgi or Hölgi, with Hálogaland, as due to popular etymology.

Detter proposes further an ingenious theory, not mentioned in what precedes, as to the origin of Irpa, which he thinks also explains why in the Icelandic story Hölgi is made Thórgerth's father, instead of her p. 336. bridegroom as he was in the beginning. Detter thinks that the name *Irpa*, 'the brown one,' designates her as a slave-woman, or as a maid of low origin (cf. *Erpr* in the Jǫrmunrekk-story, *Hǫsvir*, *Kráka*, etc.), and that originally she was identical with Yrsa, who, like Kráka, was set to herd cattle, and whose name was that of a dog. The making of Hölgi into Thórgerth's father rests, according to Detter, on a confusion of the mother Thora, or Olov, and the daughter Yrsa, who are both called Helgi's bride; Helgi was Yrsa's father and

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Olrik, *Saksnes Oldhist.*, II, 144 ff.

lover. This confusion of mother and daughter occurs in the *Chron. Erixi*, or, more correctly, the *Ry Annals*,<sup>1</sup> where the Danish king Helgi's daughter, who later bears him Hrólf Kraki, is called Thora.

It might be argued in favour of Detter's combination, that it shows the existence of a woman with the name Thora who could be said to be at once Helgi's bride and Helgi's daughter. Yet I cannot think this combination probable; for, since Hrólf Kraki's mother is everywhere called Yrsa (Ursa), both in Danish and in Norwegian-Icelandic sources (with the exception of *Chron. Erixi*, where, by confusion with the mother, she is called Thora), we have no right to suppose that she was also called Irpa, and that Thórgerth's sister Irpa was originally the same personage.

Even if Detter were right, which I do not believe, in the combination of Irpa and Yrsa, we might suppose that Irish accounts had something to do with the making of Irpa into a goddess or troll-wife who, like her sister, had power over the elements, and helped her favourite in a sea-fight. Only in the later form of the story does Irpa appear; and Thórgerth and her sister were not at first associated with Earl Hákon. There is, then, no foundation whatever for the statements that Earl Hákon sacrificed his son to Thórgerth Hølgabrúth in the battle of the Hjørung Bay, and that he had a temple in which were images of Thórgerth and Irpa. The author of *Fagrskinna* shows his sound common sense in not saying a word of Thórgerth. Snorri does not mention her name in *Heimskringla*; but, after

<sup>1</sup> The former in *Scr. r. Dan.*, i, 151; the latter in Pertz, *Script.*, xvi, 393.

telling of the Battle of the Jómsvíkings, he says: p. 337. 'There is a story current among the people that Earl Hákon sacrificed his son Erling in this battle to obtain victory, whereupon there arose a great storm, and the Jómsvíkings began to fall.' Evidently Snorri did not believe in the story of the sacrifice.

On the contrary, in both Snorri and *Fagrskinna*, the fearful hail-storm which raged during the battle is regarded as an undoubted fact; and all modern historians accept it as such.<sup>1</sup>

Previously it was thought that this hail-storm was also mentioned in a poem by Tind Hallkelsson; but Finnur Jónsson has shown<sup>2</sup> that it is a question there of the hail of arrows. The skald's words seem to mean: 'In Odin's storm it hailed with the hail of the bow.'<sup>3</sup>

It is not going far to suppose that the whole story of the hail-storm in the battle arose from a misunderstanding of Tind's verse. In the same way

<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., P. A. Munch, *Norske Folks Hist.*, 1, 2, p. 118; Storm in (*Norsk*) *Hist. Tidskrift*, IV, 426 f.

<sup>2</sup> *Aarbøger f. nord. Oldk.*, 1886, pp. 327-329, 357, 360.

<sup>3</sup> F. Jónsson reads:

*Dreif at viðres vœðre*  
 . . . *grimmio* . . .  
 . . .  
 . . . *fjörnes hagle*.

He has substituted *fjörnes* (which is graphically rather remote) for the meaningless *tímls* of the MS. I conjectured first *tvívið-hagli* from *tvíviðr*, 'bow'; cf. *hagl tvíviðar*, Merl., II, 65. Yet the combined form, instead of the genitive (to which *tímls* points) seems to me suspicious. Is, therefore, the right form *tvívis hagli*? and was the Irish *tílag*, 'bow,' made over into *\*tílvir*, *\*tvívir*, which form was later changed into *tvíviðr* (gen. *tvíviðar*), i.e. a tree composed of two pieces? Or does *\*tvívir*, from *\*tvílvir*, designate the bow as that which consists of two bits of yew-tree?

'the shower of the battle-clouds,' *i.e.* the shields (*morð-skýja hríð*, in Tind, st. 9), may have been misunderstood as real clouds which brought death and defeat. 'The crackling of the flames of Odin (*i.e.* the swords) increased' (*gnýr óx Fjölfnis fíra*, in st. 5) may have been understood to refer to the fire of lightning. And the words of the skald in the same strophe, that the mail-clad warriors cast their birnies from them, may have brought about the account in the *Jómsvíkingasaga* that earlier in the day it had been so hot that people had taken off their clothes.

This conjecture, that the account of the hail-storm in the Battle of the Jómsvíkings arose from a misunderstanding of Tind Hallkelsson's verse, is uncertain. As regards the myth of Thórgerth Hølgabrúth, however, I think I have clearly shown that, before the time when sagas were written down, Icelandic tradition concerning the history of Earl Hákon was overgrown with bright-coloured weeds of fancy and fable to a greater extent than has hitherto been imagined.

I have, I think, shown that the story of Thórgerth Hølgabrúth was composed by a Norwegian in imitation of the Lays of Hjørvarth and of Hrímgrerth, under the influence of Irish accounts, and that, therefore, it was probably composed in Ireland. If so, Norwegian skalds and saga-writers in Ireland knew the stories of Hjørvarth and Helgi, of Sváfa and Hrímgrerth at the time when the story of Thórgerth Hølgabrúth took shape (*i.e.* between ca. 1050 and ca. 1130, most likely ca. 1050).



## XXVI

## CONCLUSION.

THERE are several important questions concerning the Helgi-lays which I have only touched upon, without being able to treat them fully in this present investigation, and on which I have not been able to set forth my individual opinion, because the solution of these questions requires first the careful treatment of many other old stories recorded in Iceland, not only p. 339. in the Edda, but also to some extent in other documents. Here, however, in conclusion, I would state more clearly, in few words, some of these questions, and express a little more definitely my opinion in regard to them.

We have seen that the stories of Helgi, Sigrún's husband, and of Helgi Hjorvarthsson, are much influenced by, and in many ways connected with, the stories of the Völsungs and Niflungs. German scholars, above all Müllenhoff, long ago exploded a theory, which earlier had been pretty generally accepted in Scandinavia, that the story of Sigurth Fáfnisbani and the Niflungs belonged in the beginning to the Scandinavians as well as to the Germans. It is certain that the story of Sigurth, Sigmund's son, and of the Niflungs was originally a West-Germanic story, foreign to the Scandinavians.

Most German investigators of popular tales think that the form of the story of the Völsungs and Niflungs which is known in Scandinavia, especially from the

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Eddic poems and from the *Völsungasaga*, went from Germany northward; but they express themselves in general very vaguely, and give no definite information as to the way in which they suppose the story to have travelled.<sup>1</sup>

On the contrary, I have, I think, shown in what precedes that the Scandinavians adopted the story of the Völsungs (which influenced the Helgi-stories) in the West, especially in the British Isles, and particularly by association with Englishmen. They became familiar with these stories partly through poems which were composed in the Anglo-Saxon language; but they also  
p. 340. heard stories, originally Frankish, of other saga-heroes, e.g. Merovingian kings.

At another time I hope to be able to show that other Völsung-stories in the poetic Edda and in the *Völsungasaga* were in like manner first composed by Scandinavians in the West, partly with Anglo-Saxon poems as models. I shall endeavour to prove that the oldest Norse poem which mentions the story of the Völsungs, viz. the Lay of Wayland, gives evidence that it arose in England.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The usual idea is expressed thus by the Dutch scholar Sijmons (in Paul's *Grundriss*, II, 23): 'Die nordische [Form] der älteren Eddalieder, die aus ihrer fränkischen Heimat vermuthlich durch sächsische Vermittlung nach Scandinavien kam.' Mogk has recently (in *Forschungen zur d. Phil., Festgabe für Rudolf Hildebrand*, 1894, p. 1), expressed himself thus: 'Unerschütterlich fest steht vor allem das eine: die Heimat der nordisch-deutschen Heldensage ist Deutschland; von hier ist sie nach dem Norden gekommen.' Mogk thinks, as I believe incorrectly, that the story of the Völsungs and Niflungs was brought to Gautland shortly after the year 512 by the Erulians, who had heard the story from the East Goths, who in their turn learned it from the Franks.

<sup>2</sup> The theory most closely connected with mine is that of Golther, in

It is probable that Danish poets in the West had to some extent treated the West-Germanic heroic stories before the Norwegian poets began to work them up, and that the Norwegians learned the foreign stories partly from Danes.

Further, I hope to be able to prove the falseness of a notion which many cling to—viz. that the Edda comprises poems from the most different quarters of the North: some, perhaps, from the northern part of Norway; several, it may be, from the south-western part of Norway; others from the Scottish Isles, or Greenland, or Iceland. Many imagine that these poems existed exclusively in oral tradition, and were not brought into connection with one another before they were finally written down, all at the same time, by some one in Iceland, who in so doing relied either on his own memory or on communications made to him by others.

I believe, on the contrary, that it is susceptible of proof that the majority of these poems have belonged together from the time of their origin, so that the younger presuppose the older. The majority of them represent different sides of one and the same tendency, and were composed under practically the same conditions and external impulses. When it has been proved of certain Eddic poems that they were composed in the West by Norwegian poets who travelled among the English and Irish, we may believe the same p. 341.

*Germ.*, xxxiii, 469 and 476. He thinks that knowledge of the story of the Niflungs first came to Danish and Norwegian Vikings in France; that that story spread among the Vikings in the west and came over Ireland to Iceland. Yet Golther does not mention Englishmen or English poems as intermediaries.

to be true of many others. It seems, therefore, not only possible but even probable that the nucleus of the poetic Edda was not first gathered in Iceland, or even in the Shetland Islands, or in the Orkneys, but that the Norwegians who travelled now in England, now in Ireland, possessed the oldest and indeed most of the Eddic poems, already united into one collection, perhaps even as early as the middle of the eleventh century (cf. above, p. 65). This collection doubtless came to Iceland by way of the North-Scottish Isles. Afterwards, most likely in Iceland, certain later poems, the so-called *Greenland Atlamál*, for example, were added.

It was in the Scandinavian settlements in the British Isles, among Anglo-Saxons and Celts, that the Scandinavian mythic-heroic poetry waxed strong. It is this truth I would gladly see generally acknowledged; and this truth, to which Karl Müllenhoff was blind, the Iceland, Gudbrand Vigfusson, first saw clearly on English soil.

What the master of critical method at the University of Berlin could not perceive, because the German descendants of Tacitus's Germanic tribes formed the centre of his considerations, was seen by the unmethodical but sharp-sighted Iceland, because from childhood up he had lived through the outer and inner history of his people as revealed in the sagas and skaldic lays, because he himself with open eyes had wandered in the wide paths of his fathers, and, under the guidance of P. A. Munch and Konrad Maurer, had come to understand the way in which the Scandinavian

peoples have developed, to realise how much they have been influenced by the culture of the West.

The district about the Breithifjord on the western coast of Iceland, pre-eminently the home of saga-composition, Vigfusson has called Iceland's Attica.


I would name the Scandinavian settlements in the British Isles the Scandinavian Æolia.

Iceland was the Ionia of the North: there the Northern Herodotus was born.

An Attica the ancient Northern era never had.

Why did Norway not become the Northern Attica?

Was it because the North never had a Persian War?



## APPENDIX I. (SEE CHAP. II.)

### THE HELGI-LAYS IN THEIR RELATION TO LATER OLD NORSE SKALDIC POEMS.

p 5. IN many cases it is impossible to say definitely whether special agreement between two poems in style and expression is due merely to the fact that the two poets wrote in the same language and under practically the same conditions, or whether it is to be explained by direct or indirect influence and imitation. The decision is often merely a matter of opinion. But it must be remembered that the store of poetic expressions and formulas employed in the mythic-historic poetry becomes established, extends, and develops, by imitation. In what follows I shall mention several phrases merely because other phrases in the same poems show traces of imitation.

About 1145, Earl Rognvald, who was born in Norway, wrote (in conjunction with the Iclander Hall Thórarinsson) in the Orkneys the poem *Háttalykill enn forni* ('The Old Key to Versification'), in which examples of different styles of metre are given by means of verses concerning Scandinavian sagakings and historical Norwegian monarchs.

The 19th strophe of this poem, which treats of Helgi (*i.e.* probably Helgi Hvassi, who is mentioned in the fragment of the story of the Shieldings, among other places) shows



definite imitation of sts. 53 and 54 in the First Lay of Helgi Hundingsbani.<sup>1</sup>

In still other strophes of the *Háttalykill* there are expressions which show the influence partly of the First, partly of the Second Helgi-lays.<sup>2</sup> The First Helgi-lay was, therefore, known in the Orkneys about 1145. The same statement is probably true of the Second Helgi-lay, even though it is only in st. 25 that we can trace its influence on the *Háttalykill*.

<sup>1</sup> In *Háttal.*, 19 (composed in the metre *Balkarlág*) we read :

*Hafði Helgi  
í hjgrva gný  
geðstein glaðan . . .  
Var rønd røðin,  
riðu sköplkingar . . .  
átu ernir  
af jöfurs dólum,  
hreyfðusk hrafnar  
yfir hrækesti.*

This is an imitation of H. H., 1, 53-54 :

*Svipt einn var þat,  
er saman kvámu  
félvir oddar . . .  
sá hafði hilmir  
hart móðakarn . . .  
át hálu skær  
af hugins barri.*

F. Jónsson (*Litt. Hist.*, 11, 37) supposes that it is Helgi, son of Frothi's brother, who is referred to in *Háttal.*, 19.

<sup>2</sup> In *Háttal.*, st. 5, which treats of H. Hund. (and which is lacking in Egilsson's edition) we find :

*gerðisk geira harðr | gnýr.*

In this I see an imitation of H. H., 1, 54 : *óx geira gnýr*. Compare *Háttal.*, 20, *grástöðgi gríðar* (ms. *gríða*), and *Háttal.*, 6, *flagða grástöð*, with H. H., 11, 25, *gránstöð gríðar*; *Háttal.*, 15, *aldrklífs akarn*, with H. H., 1, 53, *móðakarn*; *benlogi*, *Háttal.*, 22, 34, with H. H., 1, 51. Some of these comparisons have already been made by F. Jónsson in his *Litt. Hist.*, 1, 53.

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The First Helgi-lay seems also to have been known to the author of the Proverb-Poem (*Fornyrðadrápa* or *Málshátta-p. 7. kvæði*) edited by Möbius in 1873.<sup>1</sup> This poem is supposed to have been composed in the Orkneys by Bishop Bjarni Kolbeinsson († 1222).

The Icelandic skald Gísli Illugason, a descendant of Tind Hallkelsson, went as a youth to Magnús Barefoot, after whose death in 1103 he composed a *Magnúskviða* in which, among other things, he tells of the expedition of the king to the Hebrides and to the Orkneys. In his metre, and, indeed, in his whole poetic style, we discover imitation of the three Helgi-poems and of other Eddic lays, which Gísli evidently knew.

After the death of Sigurth Slembi, in 1139, the Icelander Ívar Ingimundarsson composed in his honour a *Sigurðarbálkr* in *fornyrðislag*. Like Gísli, he took as models the Eddic lays, and especially those about Helgi.

In a poem (*flokkr*) on Harald Harthráthi's meeting with Svein Estrithsson at the river Götelf in 1063-64, which is said to have been composed by a skald whose only designation is Halli,<sup>2</sup> occurs an expression which seems to have been borrowed from the First Helgi-lay.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Málsh.*, 7<sup>1</sup>: *Bjarki átti hugarkorn hart* appears to be an imitation of H. H., 1, 53:

*sá hafði hilmir  
hart mððakarn.*

*Málsh.*, 25<sup>2</sup>: *fljóðin verða at gldrúm kþrin* refers possibly to H. Hj., 32:

*ek hefði kþrna  
ena konungbornu  
brúði þína  
at bragarfulli.*

In st. 33 this is called *glmdl.* (H. Hj., 35 has the word *fljóð*, which, however, is also found in several other old poems.)

<sup>2</sup> See F. Jónsson, *Litt. Hist.*, 1, 638 f.

<sup>3</sup> With *Har. s. Harðr.*, chap. 73 (*Corp. Poet. Bor.*, 11, 210):

*Dugir siklingum segja  
slikt alt er her líkar,*

The Iclander Bolverk Arnórsson, brother of the more famous skald Thjóthólf, composed, shortly after 1048, a *drápa* on Harald Harthráði, in which he appears to have been influenced by the First Helgi-lay.<sup>1</sup>

In a strophe which is supposed to have been composed by Thjóthólf Arnórsson in 1043, Thjóthólf seems to show familiarity with the Second Helgi-lay.<sup>2</sup>

In a poem on Magnús the Good (*Magnúsflokkur*), which p. 8 Thjóthólf Arnórsson composed in 1045 or a little later, occurs an expression which seems to betray the influence of the Hrímgærth-lay.<sup>3</sup>

Thjóthólf seems also to show familiarity with the First Helgi-lay in his lay *Sexstefja*, which he composed on Harald Harthráði in 1065; for the expression *barr ara*, 'the eagle's grain,' used to signify 'carcasses,'<sup>4</sup> appears to be a direct or indirect imitation of *hugin's barr*, 'the raven's grain,' in H. H., I, 54.

Shortly after 1064, Arnór Jarlaskáld wrote a *drápa* in memory of Thorfinn, Earl of the Orkneys. Certain expressions compare H. H., I, 46:

*þó dugir siklingum  
satt at mæla.*

<sup>1</sup> The words *skriðu beit* (*Heimskr.*, *Har. s. harðr.*, chap. 2; *C. P. B.*, II, 215), seem to be an imitation of *beit svgrt* (ms. has *h'vt*) *skriðu* in H. H., I, 23. The emendation *svgrt* is supported perhaps by the fact that Bolverk in the same strophe has *svarlan snekkju brand*. Cf. *gjálfrstöðum*, Bolverk in *Har. s. harðr.*, chap. 31 (*C. P. B.*, II, 216) with *gjálfrdýr*, H. H., I, 30.

<sup>2</sup> It is probable that the word *gar* (*Heimskr.*, *Magn. s. g.*, 31 to end; *C. P. B.*, II, 203, 6) = *í gar* is used under the influence of H. H., II, 12; for both strophes are said to have been composed the day after a predatory descent has been made on the coast of Denmark.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *í fagran framstafn* (*Heimskr.*, *Magn. s. g.*, chap. 31; *C. P. B.*, II, 201) with *í fögnum . . . beits stafni* (H. H., II, 14). *Fagr* (fair) is not so natural an epithet to apply to the stem of a ship that the agreement may be regarded as accidental.

<sup>4</sup> Sn. Edda, II, 486; *C. P. B.*, II, 208.

sions in it seem to me to make it probable (though not to prove) that the skald was familiar with the Helgi-lays at the time when he composed his own poem.<sup>1</sup>

After the death of Magnús the Good in 1047, Arnór composed a *drápa* about him, in which he uses the expression *af úlfa barri*,<sup>2</sup> 'of the corn of the wolves,' i.e. of corpses. This is an imitation of *af hugins barri*, 'of the corn of the raven,' in H. H., I, 54.<sup>3</sup>

- p. 9. After the death of Rognvald Brúsason, Earl of the Orkneys, at the close of the year 1045, Arnór composed a *drápa* about him also. In this<sup>4</sup> we find the word *attstafr*, 'descendant,' which occurs elsewhere only in H. H., I, 55, there in the older form *ättstafr*.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *ðr fíntán væri . . . vetra* (C. P. B., II, 194) with *þá er . . . var fíntán vetra*, H. H., I, 10. With *í ferðar broddi* (C. P. B., II, 195) cf. *í farar broddi*, H. H., II, 19; this likeness, however, is not convincing, since the phrase is also found in prose. No more convincing is the fact that in Arnór, just as in the Helgi-lays, the king is designated as *gramr*, *mildingr*, *rásir*, *siklingr*, *skjoldungr*, *þengill*. Arnór uses the word *þrma*.

<sup>2</sup> *Fms.*, VI, 68; C. P. B., II, 190.

<sup>3</sup> The phrase *und sik þrungit*, H. II., II, 20, also occurs in this one of Arnór's poems (*Fms.*, VI, 51; C. P. B., II, 190); but it is really a fixed formula, and no definite conclusion can be drawn from it. Cf. *und sik . . . þrungit* in Hallvarth's *Knútsdrápa* (C. P. B., II, 162), and *und sik þryngvi* in Óttar Svarti's *hofsúðlausn* of about the year 1020 (C. P. B., II, 155). Does the alliteration indicate that the original phrase in H. Hund. was *undir þryngizk*?

<sup>4</sup> C. P. B., II, 194.

<sup>5</sup> The phrase *brindýr*, 'deer of the surf,' used of a ship, seems to have passed from H. H., I, 50 into an artificial Icelandic strophe cited in *Landnámabók*, II, 6 (*Isl. ss.*, 55, I, 82). Likewise from the Helgi-lay the same phrase went over into *Búadrápa*, which is thought to have been composed by Thorkel Gíslason in the twelfth century (*Fms.*, VI, 163; Wisén, *Carm. Norr.*, p. 66). Several other phrases in this poem show the influence of the First Helgi-lay; cf. *rym randa*, Búadr. 3, with *randa rym*, II. H., I, 17; *þrymr var hár stála*, Búadr. 12, with *þrymr var álma*, II. H., I, 16. The words *raukn* and *rásir* are common to both

The kenning *valdogg*, 'slaughter-dew,' for 'blood,' occurs in the old poetry only in H. H., II, 44, and in a verse in *Landnámabók* (*fsl. ss.*, I, 164; *C. P. B.*, II, 56; Gislason, *Udvalg*, pp. 10, 73). This verse is supposed to have been composed in Iceland by Hástein Hrómundarson in the tenth century (probably the latter half). This agreement as regards *valdogg* cannot, however, be used with confidence as a contribution to the history of the Helgi-poems; for, although I consider it as probable that *valdogg* in Hástein's verse is borrowed from the Helgi-lay, it might be argued, on the other hand, that the word merely belonged to the poetic vocabulary which was common to many poems. Moreover, as regards verses such as those ascribed to Hástein and his father Hrómund, we have no certainty that they were composed at the time stated in the saga.

The same thing may be said of the expression *vega þorði*, which occurs both in H. H., II, 4, and in the so-called *Máhlíðingavísur*, which are supposed to have been written after a fight by Thórarin Thórólfsson at Mávahlíth by the Breithifjord, according to Vigfusson in the year 981 (*Eyrb.*, p. 24, chap. 18; *C. P. B.*, II, 58).

In a strophe which Víga-Glúm is said to have composed (*Glúma*, chap. 21; *C. P. B.*, II, 75) about 990, occurs the phrase *grðra geira*, 'of the grey spears,' which seems to have been borrowed from H. H., I, 12. But it cannot be definitely settled when the strophe ascribed to Glúm was composed. From the likeness of *vígnesta*, H. Hj., 8, to *vígnest*, used by Goththorm Sindri (in *Heimskr.*, *Hák. s. g.*, ed. Unger, p. 146,

poems. Vigfusson seems to have been wrong in writing *brindýrom* in Thórh Kolbeinsson's *Eiríksdrápa* (*C. P. B.*, II, 104) instead of *bládyrom*; see *Fms.*, XI, 196.

The phrase *brindýr blásvört* (H. H., I, 50) was also doubtless the model for *byrvarga blásvarta* in Thórarin Stuttfeld (c. 1120), *Sig. s. Jórs.*, chap. 6.

ed. F. J., p. 197), I dare draw no conclusion as to the poem's date. I think it improbable that the phrase was carried over from Goththorm's verse into H. Hj.; but, if the former is authentic, both poems may have derived the word from a common older source.

Vigfusson (*C. P. B.*, I, LXIV, and II, 459) suggested that Eyvind Skáldaspillir in his *Hákonarmál*, of about the year 970, imitated the First Lay of H. Hund. He regards the scene in which Hákon sits, weary of battle and wounded, on the battlefield amid the slain and sees the valkyries riding by, as an imitation of the meeting between Helgi, who sits under Eagle-stone, and the battle-maidens. Vigfusson calls attention also to the intercalated sentences in the *Hákonarmál*. I do not think the likenesses sufficient to prove that the author of this poem knew the Helgi-lay. (One might also parallel *hverr Yngva attar*, Hák., with *áttstafr Yngva*, H. H., I, 55; *beneldar*, Hák., with *benlogar*, H. H., I, 51. Hák. has *gunnfani*; *siklingr* occurs there with a less original meaning than in the Helgi-poems.) Cf. Sijmons in *Ztsch. f. d. Phil.*, XVIII, 115.

From the likeness between *móðakarn*, i.e. 'heart,' in H. H., I, 53, and *akarn dólgs*, i.e. 'hearts,' in *þórsdrápa*, 10 (Sn. Edda, I, 296) I dare conclude nothing as to the age of the First Helgi-lay, because I believe (what I cannot here prove) that the line under discussion in *þórsdrápa* is not by Eilíf Guthrúnarson, but later. Moreover, it is not entirely certain that the author of the verse in *þórsdrápa* has here imitated the Helgi-lay, although it seems to me to be probable.

The general conclusions drawn from the facts brought forward in this Appendix will be found stated in Chap. II. See p. 5 f.



## APPENDIX II. (SEE CHAP. III.)

THE FIRST HELGI-LAY IN ITS RELATION TO  
OLDER NORSE POEMS.A. *Imitations of the Second Helgi-Lay by the First Helgi-Lay.*

SOME of the phrases from the two Helgi-lays which I shall p. 12, n. cite in what follows, are also to be found elsewhere; as a rule, however, I do not give these other instances of their use.

*buðlunga* in alliteration with *bestan*, I, 2; *buðlungr* in alliteration with *bestr*, II, 30, *buðlungr~bótir*, I, 12; *buðlungr~bót*, II, 44. We find also in both poems *doglingr*, *hildingr*, *hilmir*, *lofðungr*, and several expressions for related ideas.

*Ylfinga nið~angri*, I, 5; *Ylfinga niðr~angr*, II, 47, *niðr Ylfinga*, II, 8.

*hvesir augu*, I, 6, *hvoðss eru augu*, II, 2; both expressions used with reference to Helgi.

*burr Sigmundar*, I, 6, *Sigmundar bur*, I, 11, and II, 12.

*brá ljóma*, I, 15, *ljóma bregði*, II, 36.

*und hjálmum*, I, 15; II, 7.

*brynjur váru þeira blóði stoknar*, I, 15; *hvi er brynja þin blóði stokkin*, II, 7.

*suðrænar*, I, 16 (as *Vkv.*, I), *suðræn*, II, 45; in both places of battle-maidens.

*uggi eigi þú*, I, 20; cf. *hið eigi þú*, II, 18.

*doglingar dagsbrún sjá*, I, 26; *dogglitir dagsbrún sjá*, II, 43.

*víkingar*, I, 27, and II, 4; II, 19.

I, 32, and I, 35; cf. II, 19-20.

*svinum gefr*, I, 34; *gefa svinum soð*, II, 39.

*ørnu sadda*, I, 35; *ætt ara . . . sadda*, II, 8.

*á kvernum*, I, 35; II, 2.

*vargljóðum vanr á viðum úti*, I, 41; *vargr á viðum úti*, II, 33.

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*gullbitluð*, I, 42 ; *gullbitli vanr*, II, 36.

*at Frekasteini*, I, 44, I, 53 ; II, 21, II, 26.

As to I, 45-46 in relation to II, 23-24, see above, p. 200 f.

*Gylfa*, I, 49 ; II, 27.

*una lifi*, I, 55 ; II, 36.

*rauðir baugar*, I, 56 ; *bauga rauða*, II, 35.

*sigrs ok landa*, I, 56 ; *munar ok landa*, II, 46.

I have found no sure indication that verses were taken into the Second Helgi-lay which were originally written to fill out the First Lay, and which are later than this poem, as was conjectured (by Fr. Zarncke?) in *Liter. Centralblatt*, 1867, No. 43. Nevertheless I cannot make any conclusive statement regarding the comparative age of the First Helgi-lay and stanzas 5-13 of the Second. Is *í Bragalundi*, II, 8, an imitation of *í Brálundi*, I, 1 and 3?

### B. The First Helgi-Lay and *Völuspá*.

p. 13, n. Sinfjötli says to Guthmund (st. 39):

*Niu áttu vit  
ílfá alna  
ek var einn faðir þeira.*

‘We two had together nine children who were wolves; I only was their father.’ Guthmund answers (st. 40):

*Faðir varattu  
fenrisúlfa  
gllum ellri,  
svá at ek muna.*

‘Thou wert not father of Fenrir’s wolves, older than all, so far as I remember.’

p. 14, n. This shows clearly the influence of *Vpá.*, 40:

*Austr sat en aldna  
í Járnvíði  
ok fæddi þar  
Fenris kindir.*

'In the east sat the old woman in Ironwood, and gave birth there to Fenrir's brood.'

In the Helgi-lay the original meaning of *Fenrisúlfr*, 'the wolf of hell,' is modified.

H. H., I, 36:

*fítt mantu, fylkir!  
fornra spjalla*

preserves a reminiscence of Vpá., 1:

*forn spjall frá,  
þau er fremst um man,*

where the phrase is more suitable, since in Vpá. the sibyl gives information of remote ages (cf. Sijmons in Paul-Braune, *Beiträge*, IV, 174). *þursa meýjar* is found in H. H., I, 40, and Vpá., 8. In *völva*, 37, and *valkyrja*, 38, H. H., I, we have also references to the mythical world treated in Vpá. The word *valkyrjur* occurs in Vpá., 34.

C. *Vice versa*, reminiscences of the Helgi-lay seem to have exerted an influence on certain names in the later redactions of the Vpá. Vpá., 44, which prophesies of the last days of the world, begins as follows:—

*Geyr Garmr mjök  
fyr Gnipahelli.*

'Garm barks much (fiercely) before Gnipi-Cave.' But in the prose rendering of this passage the Uppsala-Edda has *Gnipalundi* instead of *Gnipahelli*. This change is due to the p. 15, n. influence of the expression *fyr Gnipalundi*, H. H., I, 40 and 50. From the Helgi-lay, *Gnipalundr* passed into *þorsteins saga þajarmagns*, where it is the name of a fabulous place. In Vpá., 14, we read of the dwarfs:

*þeir er sóttu  
frá salar steini.*

In the mss. of Snorri's Edda, instead of *salar steini*, we find

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*svarins* (*svarnis*, Uppsalaþók) *haugi*, which is the name of a place peculiar to the Helgi-stories.

- p. 15. The Helgi-poet must also have known the *Grímnismál*. The phrase *heilög vötn*, H. H., I, 1, i.e. 'holy waters,' used of the waters which stream down from the heavens in a thunder-storm, is certainly borrowed from *Grímn.*, 29; for there the phrase can be more easily explained: the god Thor is said to wade through the waters. In *Grímn.*, moreover, the gate of Valhöll is likewise called 'holy' (st. 22).

In H. H., I, 38, Sinfjötli says to Guthmund: 'Thou wert a valkyrie in Odin's hall' (*valkyrja . . . at Alfðöru*). 'All the *einherjar* were ready to fight for thy sake.' This refers to *Grímn.*, 36, where Odin gives the names of the valkyries. He begins: 'I will that Hrist and Mist bear [drinking-] horns to me,' and ends: 'Randgríth and Ráthgríth and Reginleif, let them bear ale to the *einherjar*' (cf. *öllum einherjum*, *Grímn.*, 51). *Alfðör* is mentioned as one of Odin's names in *Grímn.*, 48.

Of Helgi, who has killed the sons of Hunding, we read in H. H., I, 14:

*farit hafði hann allri  
att geirmímis,*

'he had destroyed the whole race of Spear-Mímir.' Helgi's enemy is thus indicated by an artificial kenning, 'Spear-Mímir.' In my opinion, this kenning presupposes on one side the name given to the hero in *Guðr. hvot*, 8, viz. *geirnjörðr*, 'Spear-Njörth.' We see throughout Old Norse poetry, as it developed in opposition to the poetry of other Germanic peoples, an effort to designate heroes with names suggesting their likeness to the gods. The word *sigtívar*, 'victory-gods,'

- p. 16. 'battle-gods' becomes thus a designation of heroes. King Atli has his Valhöll and high-seat (*hlíðskjálf*) like Odin. There arose, therefore, a long series of artificial designations for men, which I have tried to elucidate in my *Bidrag til den ældste Skaldedigtningens Historie*, pp. 38 ff. Since heroes

were thus designated as gods, it was natural that Helgi's enemies (who were regarded as despicable) should be described by an expression which really is suitable for one of the giants, the opposite of the gods.

The designation *geirmímir* presupposes, therefore, on the other side, *Grímn.*, 50, where Odin says:

*Sviðurr ok Sviðrir  
er ek hét at Sþökkmímis  
ok duðak þann enn aldna jötun,  
þá er ek Miðviðnis vark  
ens mæra burar  
orðinn einn bani.*

'Svithur and Svithrir I called myself at Sþökkmímir's, and fooled the old giant, when I alone became the slayer of Mithvithnir his famous son.' Here, then, it is said of Odin that he slew the son of a giant Sþökkmímir. It is in imitation of this statement that Hunding, whose sons Helgi has slain, is called in *H. H.*, 1, 14, 'Spear-Mímir.'<sup>1</sup>

The author of the First Helgi-lay probably knew the *Rígs- p. 17. þula*. Proof of this may be seen in the use of the word *tötrughyppja*, 'the ragged woman,' which occurs in 1, 43, and, to describe a bondwoman, in *Ríg.*, 13.

In *H. H.*, 1, 17, *álmar* signifies 'bows.' The transition

<sup>1</sup> Cf. also *björg eða brim*, *H. H.*, 1, 28, and *björg ok brim*, *Grímn.*, 38.

It seems to me most probable that the author of the Helgi-lay knew also the *Lokasenna*. In *H. H.*, 1, 37, *Sinfjötli* says to Guthmund:

*þú vart vólva  
í Varinseyju,*

where *vólva* really means a witch. The retort in the word-combat appears to have arisen under the influence of *Lok.*, 24, where Loki reminds Odin how he exercised witchcraft *sem vólur*, and that on an island: *Sámseyju í*. In *H. H.*, 1, 39, *Sinfjötli* accuses Guthmund of having borne children like a woman, declaring, moreover, that these children were wolves; and on account of this *fenrisulfar* is inserted in 1, 40. In *Lok.*, 23, Loki is accused of having borne children like a woman. Loki's son Fenrir is named in *Lok.*, 38, 39.

from the meaning 'elm' to that of 'bow' has its explanation in Ríg., 28: *álm of bendi*, i.e. 'he bent an elm (elm branch),' in order, of course, to make a bow; cf. Ríg., 35, *álm at beygja*, 'to bend an elm' (for a bow). The Helgi-lay doubtless presupposes here the poem on Ríg. Cf. also *hjerum at bregða*, H. H., I, 46, i.e. 'to swing swords,' with *hjerui brá*, Ríg., 37, 'swung the sword.' Ríg., 47 had formerly the line *hjerum of bregða*, which is wanting in the extant manuscript.

There are a few striking agreements between *Hyndluljóð* and the First Helgi-lay; but I dare not for the present use them to determine the relative ages of the two poems. Special investigations of both poems must first be made.<sup>1</sup>

The author of the Helgi-lay was influenced by the Lay of Wayland (*Völundarkviða*). The battle-maidens are called in H. H., I, 16, *disir suðrænar*,<sup>2</sup> 'southern women,' following the synonymous *drósisr suðrænar* in Vkv., I. In Vkv. it is more obvious why the maidens are called 'southern.'

p. 18. I am of the opinion that *alvitr* in Vkv., I, 3, 10, is a corruption of *ælbite* (*elfete*), 'swans,' in an English poem which was the model of the Norse lay, but in such a way that *alvitr*, carried over into the poem in Norse form, was regarded

<sup>1</sup> In H. H., I, 9 we read of the young Helgi: *hann galt ok gaf gull verðungu*, 'he gave gold to the royal retinue in payment of services and as gifts.' In Hyndl., 2 we read of Odin: *hann geldr ok gefr gull verðungu*. Flat. has *verdugum*. In H. II., I, 43, occurs *imðar* from *Imð*, the name of a giantess. In Hyndl., 37 (which strophe belongs, in the opinion of some, to a different poem, 'the short *Völuspá*'), the name *Imdr* (more correctly *Imð*) is given to one of the giant-maidens who are Heimdall's mothers. It is probable that the name from the outset belonged to that special myth, and that its use to signify a giantess in general is later. It is also said in Hyndl. that Loki has wolves for sons, and has borne children like a woman. Niedner (*Ztsch. f. d. Alt.*, xxxvi, 292) puts Hyndl. in the list of the Eddic poems of which the author of the First Helgi-lay made most use.

<sup>2</sup> This phrase should not, therefore, in my opinion, be altered to *dis suðræna*.



as *al-vitr*, and brought into connection with *vitr*, 'wights, supernatural female beings.'<sup>1</sup> I find imitations of this expression in Vkv. in many designations of victory-maidens: in *alvitr*, sing., in H. H., II, 26, which was taken to mean 'a woman who is out and out a (supernatural) wight';<sup>2</sup> likewise in *hjálmvitr*, 'helmet-decked wights,' H. H., I, 54; *sárvitr*, sing., 'wound-wight,' in the same place; *fólkvitr*, acc. sing., 'battle-(battalion)-wight,' Fáfñ., 43.<sup>3</sup>

The First Helgi-lay presupposes familiarity on the part of its author with the verses which are united under the name *Fáfñismál*.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This suggestion I had made in my lectures before I read Wadstein's article in *Uppsalastudier*, where he explains (p. 175) *Alvitr* in Vkv. as *alfitr*, 'swans,' but without supposing influence from Anglo-Saxon. Sievers (Paul-Braune, *Beit.*, XII, 488) thinks *alvitr* in Vkv. corresponds to A.S. *alwihle*, 'beings from elsewhere (from another world).'

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the name of the dwarf *Alþjófr*.

<sup>3</sup> In *alvit'ar*, in the prose passage before Vkv., it was *vitr*, 'wise,' which the writer had in mind.

<sup>4</sup> We read of the young Helgi in H. H., I, 9:

p. 18, n.

*þá nam at vaxa  
fyr vína brjósti.*

With this cf. Fáfñir's words to Sigurth in Fáfñ., 7:

*ef þu vaxa næðir  
fyr þinna vína brjósti,*

where the original reading certainly was: *fyr vína brjósti*.

H. H., I, 21, runs as follows:—

*iðgnógan  
ógnar ljóma  
brögnum bjóða.*

Here *ógnar ljómi* certainly means 'gold.' This kenning is evidently borrowed from Fáfñ., 42, where we read of the hall in which Sigdrífa is sleeping:

*þann hafa horskir  
halir um ggrvan  
ör óðfekkum  
ógnar ljóma.*

- p. 19. I am doubtful what to think of the relations of the First Helgi-lay to *Reginsmál*. The strophes of that poem, which are written in the metre *ljóðaháttir*, appear at all events to be older than the First Helgi-lay. Yet in Reg., 14 (a strophe written in *fornyrðislag*) Sigurth is called *Yngva konr*, 'Yngvi's relative,' an appellation doubtless due to the influence of the Helgi-lays; for it is suitably applied to Helgi, a hero of old Danish saga, but not to Sigurth, a Frankish hero. It might, indeed, be a direct imitation of *áttstafr Yngva*, 'Yngvi's descendant,' which is used to designate Helgi in H. H., 1, 55.

In the same strophe, Reg. 14, we read of Sigurth :

*Þrymr um ell lönd | þrlogslímu.*

'The bonds of fate are stretched out over all lands.' This expression would seem to have been influenced by the part of the First Helgi-lay which describes how the Norns fasten under the heavens the bands which decide Helgi's fate. In this passage occur the words *þrlogþáttu*, 'the threads of fate,' and *gullin símu*, 'the golden bands.'<sup>1</sup>

The author of the First Helgi-lay seems to have known the Lay of Sigurth, of which only the ending is preserved.<sup>2</sup>

19. n. According to their original meaning, the words *ógnar ljómi* should mean 'a gleam of light which fills with terror,' and in Fáf. this seems to have been so understood; for none but Sigurth, a hero whom nothing terrifies, is able to awake Sigdrífa.

If this is right, then the author of H. H., 1, misunderstood *ógnar ljóma* in Fáf. 42, thinking that it meant 'the gleam of the water,' i.e. 'gold.'

Among the names of rivers in Sn. Edda, 1, 576 we find (what is perhaps due to H. H., 1, 9) *ógn*, for which Ieß has *augn*. But instead of this Sn. Edda, 11, 479 and 563 has *ofn*, i.e. *ofn*, Avon in England.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. also *sjá mun rásir ríkstr und sólu*, Reg. 14, with *þann báðu fylki frágstan verða ok buðlunga bestan þykkja*, H. H., 1, 2. Niedner in *Ztsch. f. d. Alt.*, xxxvi, 293, regards the relations as just the opposite.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *hrafni kvað at hrafni, sat á hám meiði*, H. H., 1, 5, with *hrafni* 20, n. at *meiði hátt kallaði*, Brot, 5; *Heill skaltu vlsi! virða njóta . . . er*

When King Høthbrodd sees his messengers who have p. 20. come to announce the arrival of the enemy, he asks (H. H., 1, 48): *Hví er hermðar litr | á Hniflungum?* 'Why do the chieftains look so sorrowful?' He thus designates the men here as *Hniflungar*. *Niflungar* (originally with initial *n*, not *hn*<sup>1</sup>), is properly used in the Eddic poems to describe the race to which Gunnar and Hogni belonged. But here in the Helgi-lay it is applied, with less original meaning, to chieftains who are at feud with the Völsungs (among whom Helgi is here included).

I conjecture that the poet knew the name *Niflungar* from *Atlakviða*, as well as from other poems, and the form with initial *Hn* from *Guthrúnarhvöt*, st. 12, where Guthrún tells how she has killed the sons which she had borne Atli. She says: 'before I cut off the heads of the Niflungs.' The ms. has: *áþr ec hnóf hofuþ af niflungom*; but the metre shows that the poet must have said:

*ðör hnófk hofuð  
af Hniflungum.*

*þú felt hefir inn flugartrauða þofur . . . heill skaltu, buðlungr! bæði njóta . . . sigrs ok landa*, H. H., 1, 55 f, with *Vel skuluð njóta vörma ok landa . . . Lengi* (ms. *vel*) *skuluð njóta landa ok þegna, er þer fraknan gram falla létuð*, Brot, 8 and 10 (Niedner in *Ztsch. f. d. Alt.*, 36, p. 293). In both cases the words are put into the mouth of a woman. Cf. *londum ok þegnum*, H. H., 1, 10, with *landa ok þegna*, Brot, 10 (but *land ok þegnar* are also found united in prose).

Whether H. H., 1 presupposes the *Oddrúnargrátr*, I dare not decide definitely; but I think it probable. Cf. *Sendi dru allvaldr*, H. H., 1, 21, with *Sendi Atli dru*, Oddr. 25; *bíðið . . . bína verða*, H. H., 1, 22, with *bæð ek ambáttir bínar verða*, Oddr. 20 (H. Hj., 36 is nearer still); *hringbrotar*, H. H., 1, 45, with *hringbrota*, Oddr. 22 (here the relations can scarcely be the opposite); *þá er borgir braut*, H. H., 1, 3, with *þá var . . . borg brotin*, Oddr. 18.

<sup>1</sup> Golthe (*Studien zur germ. Sagengesch.*, p. 86) and Björn Ólsen (*Hvar eru Eddukvæðin til orðin?* p. 119 f) are wrong, I believe, in doubting this; but I cannot discuss the question here.

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p. 21. In *Atlamdǫl*, 88, *Hniflungr* (written in the MS. with *hn*) is the name of Hogni's son who helps Guthrún to slay Atli. Here also the form with *hn* is perhaps taken from the *Guðrúnarkvæði*.<sup>1</sup>

There are other expressions used by the author of the First Helgi-lay which support the conjecture that he knew the *Guðrúnarkvæði*.<sup>2</sup>

The relations existing between the last two poems make it probable that the author of the former also knew the *Hamðismál*, although that cannot strictly be proved.<sup>3</sup>

p. 21, n. I conjecture also that *ör vígþrimu*, H. H., 1, 7, is an imitation of *frá eggþrimu* in *Eiríksmál*. The word *þrima* never occurs in prose. The *Eiríksmál* is the only poem in popular metre older than H. H., 1, in which it is found. In both poems the expressions mean 'from the battle'; in both Sigmund figures; both tell of the life of the *einherjar* in Valhöll.

Later skalds use *þrima* in the meaning of 'thunder, tumult,' like *þruma*; cf. *Vellekla*.

Did *þrima* in *eggþrima* really have the meaning 'vibrating motion' (cf. Lith. *trìmti*= 'quiver, tremble,' and *eggleikr*), which was not understood by later skalds?

Is there any historical connection between *ván erum rómu*, H. H., 1, 25, and *er vitu rómu væni* in the *Hrafnsmál* on Harald Fairhair? In both poems it is told directly after that the warriors row.

<sup>1</sup> From the fact that *Hniflungr* occurs not only in the Greenland *Atlamdǫl*, but also in H. H., 1, and in the *Guðrúnarkvæði*, Finnur Jónsson concludes (certainly wrongly) that the last two poems were composed in Greenland.

<sup>2</sup> The word *hjørþing* occurs in H. H., 1, 50 and *Guðr. hv.*, 6. Cf. *bræðr mínir at bana urðu*, *Guðr. hv.*, 10, with *bræðr þínum at bana orðit*, H. H., 1, 36. In my opinion (see above, p. 388), *geirmímir* originated under the influence of *geirnþjófr*, *Ghr.* 8.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Helga inn hugum stóra*, H. H., 1, 1, with *Hamðir inn hugum-stóri*, *Hamð.* 6; *göðborinn*, H. H., 1, 32, with *göðbornir*, *Hamð.* 16.

## APPENDIX III. (SEE CHAP. X.)

THE SECOND HELGI-LAY IN ITS RELATION TO  
OTHER NORSE POEMS.I. *Influence of the Völundarkviða on H. Hund., II.*

Cf. the designations of a battle-maiden in H. H., II: *alvitr* p. 121 and (26), *suðræn* (45). Note also the uncommon adjective notes.  
*ámunnr*, II, 11, and Vkv. 17; cf. *baugvarið*, II, 35, *gullvarið*, II, 45, and *fagrvarið*, Vkv. 39.

II. There is particular similarity in expressions between H. H., II, and the Second Guthrún-lay. Which of the two is the older is still doubtful.

In H. H., II, 38, the dead Helgi is lauded by his wife, who compares him to a stag; in Guðr., II, 2, the dead Sigurth is lauded by his wife and compared to a stag. Note also *una lifi*, H. H., II, 36, Guðr., II, 27; *fyr vestan ver*, H. H., II, 8; *fyr handan ver*, Guðr., II, 7.

## III. In H. H., II, 34:

*Ær ertu, systir!  
ok þrvita,  
er þú bræðr þínum  
biðr forskapa*

we have a similarity, which presupposes imitation on one side or the other, with *Völs.-saga*, chap. 5: *Ær ertu ok þrvita, er þú biðr bræðrum þínum meira þols*. These words doubtless read in verse:

*Ær ertu, Signý!  
ok þrvita,  
er þú bræðrum biðr  
þols um meira.*

Was the poem on Siggeir and Signý the older?

## IV. Many similarities between the Second Helgi-lay and

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notes.

other Eddic poems are scattered, and concern poetic expressions which do not with certainty prove particular connection between the two poems under discussion. Thus, *e.g.*, cf. *ær ertu . . . ok þrvita*, H. H., II, 34, Oddr., II, Herv., 12 (27); *ærr ertu . . . ok þrviti*, Lok., 21, cf. 29, 47. Cf. *fólks jaðarr*, H. H., II, 42, and *ása jaðarr*, Lok., 35; *otul augu*, H. H., II, 4, and *otul váru augu*, Ríg., 34; *asklimum*, H. H., II, 50, and Reg., 22; *vígspjöll*, H. H., II, 12, and Grott., 19; *stíðkkrlúðr*, H. H., II, 2, and *stukku stórar steðr frá lúðri*, Grott., 21; *burr Sigmundar* and *Sigmundar burr* of Helgi and of Sigurth.

How is the historical relation between *brimis eggjar*, H. H., II, 10, and Sigdr., 14 (cf. *brimis dōmar*, H. H., II, 22) to be regarded?

V. In other cases similarities are due to borrowings from the Second Lay. This seems to be presupposed by *Brot af Sigurðarkviðu* (cf. *dis Skjöldunga*, Brot, 14, which follows H. H., II, 51; for the Helgi-story, but not the Volsung-story, stood from the outset in connection with the story of the Shieldings). Also by the complete Sigurth-lay, together with the First Guthrún-lay. Following *einn veldr Óðinn øllu bōlvi*, H. H., II, 34, we have *veldr einn* (originally *einn veldr*) *Atli øllu bōlvi*, Guðr., I, 25, *ein veldr Brynhildr øllu bōlvi*, Sig., 27.

VI. Probably the Second Lay was familiar to the authors of the following lays:—

(a) ODDRÚNARGRÁTR: cf. *ær ertu . . . ok þrvita*, H. H., II, 34, and Oddr., II; *þér bjðr bróðir banga rauða*, H. H., II, 35, and *Buðu þeir Atla banga rauða ok bræðr minum bætr ósmáðar*, Oddr., 21; *Buðu vit þegnum banga rauða*, Oddr., 26; *skævaði*, H. H., II, 4, and *skævandi*, Oddr., 32; *allra flestir niðjar þínir*, H. H., II, 28, and *margir mínir niðjar*, Oddr., 23.

(b) HYNÐLULJÓÐ: cf. *drekka dýrar veigar*, H. H., II, 46, and Hyn., 50.

(c) ATLAMÁL: cf. *vinnat skjöldungar skopum*, H. H., II, 29, and *skopum víðr manngi*, Atm., 48; *grimmúðgastan*, H. H.,



11, 27, and *grimmúðgan*, Atm., 59; *skævaði*, H. H., 11, 4, and *skæva*, Atm., 98. (Does *Snævarr ok Sólarr*, Atm., 30, presuppose *Sólffjöll*, *Snæffjöll*, H. H., 1, 8?)

VII. The verses in the *Hervararsaga* seem to show the influence of both First and Second Lays. Cf. *Hrafn . . . af hálm meði*, Herv., p. 310, with *hrafn kvað at hrafni, sat á hálm meði*, H. H., 1, 5; *í Munarvági*, Herv., pp. 212, 215, with *í Unavágum*, H. H., 1, 31; *gjálfrmara*, Herv., p. 221, with *gjálfrdýr*, H. H., 1, 30; *eggja spor*, Herv., p. 308, with *dólgspor*, H. H., 11, 42; *ær ertu . . . ok þrvita*, Herv., p. 216, with H. H., 11, 34; *drekka ok dæma dýrar veigar*, Herv., p. 274, with *drekka dýrar veigar*, H. H., 11, 46.

VIII. The author of the *Gripisspá* also doubtless knew the p. 123. Helgi-poems.



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